Quiet Hours,

NEW SERIES:

By JOHN PULSFORD.

RENOVATED BEING, (as it is in our RISEN AND GLORIFIED LORD,) is not only the ground and Centre of our Religion; but the Solution of the otherwise insoluble Problem of Man and nature.

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TO THE READER.

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Were the title of this book, THE SUBSTANTIVE REALITY OF THE RELIGION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, nothing could more justly express its spirit and design. I quote, therefore, the proposition which occurs in page 257; as an avowal of the conception from which it is written, and from which alone its inner contents can be apprehended :—

From beginning to end, the Religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, is strictly *Substantive.* The end of which is the organic development of the One Absolutely Living Substance, in the New Nature of believers.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who only hath Immortality," "Life in Himself," is Life-giver to the human race. "The last Adam is a *Life-giving Spirit.*" 1 Cor. xi. 45. "The Bread of God is He Which cometh down from heaven, and *giveth Life unto the world.*" "Whoso eateth My Flesh, and

drinketh My Blood, *hath Eternal Life.*" "Ye will not come to Me, that *ye might have Life.*" The Life which Christ gives to the soul, is the very inmost principle and possibility of Righteousness. "If there had been a law given, which could have given *Life*, verily Righteousness should have been by the law." Every other Righteousness then, save that only of the Life of Jesus in us, will be found to be but a figment before God. "*Christ* is the end of the law for Righteousness, to every one that believeth."

Christ is the sum and substance of His own Religion. He is the Alpha and Omega of our Hope. Of all True Substance, He is the First and Last. We live because He lives in us.

Here, my thoughtful and enquiring readers, here is your safeguard, against all mere Thought—Religions, against Pantheism, Rationalism, unreal Mysticism, and every species of specious Naturalism. All of which are but reflections and guesses of the human mind,—on the visible universe,—or, on the invisible, or, on the junction, ever joining ever disjoining, of both.

The world's blunder is ever to make nature, and not Christ, the standard of judgment. (A very excusable Egyptian, or *Pagan* blunder; but a very *perverse* blunder for Europeans, in the nineteenth century after Christ.) The consequence of which is, that nature continues to be a mist of darkness, to the

human intellect, and Christ a mere cipher. Let nature be judged from the Divine maturity of her Firstfruits in the Body of the Lord Jesus, and her problem is solved.

From all unreality, as well as from sin, from mere words, thoughts, philosophies, the Lord is our Deliverer. By drawing our life into Himself, He lifts us not only above all *speculations about* man and the universe, but above all that is known as nature, in her present mode of being. Neither the appearances of the physical, nor the subtleties and tyrannies of the spiritual universe, can any more affect the soul who is in THE ONE, and who perceives all things in Him.

Pity poor Sisyphus! who will not accept God's solution, but toils on, from age to age, to find, or to make, another solution.

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Quiet Hours.

THE ETERNAL FOUNDATION.

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THERE is an order in things. That order is Divine. You must observe that order, or pay a severe penalty. You cannot produce ripe corn, without first producing the green blade, you cannot have the green blade, except from seed, nor from seed, unless under certain conditions. You cannot multiply birds, except you have first the eggs. You cannot have a house without a foundation, nor with one, unless you build on it. You cannot grow timber, unless you have *ground.*

II.—But in Spiritual things, there are persons who think to build their house, by beginning *in the air;* and who are looking for fruit without trees, and for trees without roots, and for roots, trees and fruit, *without ground.*

There are two classes of persons who pay little respect to the foundations of things: namely, those who, right or wrong, determine to live according to their own hearts. Whatever be said about right

beginnings, the folly of this course, or the ungodliness of the other, they will live as they like. Let what consequences may come of it, they will not give up their own will to the will of another, *though that other be God.*

The other class are those well-intentioned, easy sort of people, who have no idea of attaching grave importance *to any thing spiritual and eternal.* They observe the order of God in things natural, but in spiritual things they expect God to adjust His order to theirs. They think to come to the end of their journey without setting out. They calculate on the grapes of God, apart from "the True Vine" of God. They are sure enough of Heaven, whether there be *any ground of heaven* in them, or not. They do not say, 'We must break up our fallow ground, or we shall have no harvest;' but, while their ground is bringing forth its crop of thistles and thorns, they say, 'Our harvest is sure at the last, *because God is good.*'

III.—God is good, but *His order must be respected,* for His goodness operates according, and not contrary, to that order. The order in God's own Being is as eternal as His Being. If you could imagine certain changes to take place

in the Divine Nature, similar to those which have taken place in fallen angels and men, then *God would be no more.* The foundations of His Being and Character being gone, God would be gone. God is bound to His foundations. They must abide eternally the same. Could there be variableness, or the shadow of a turning with God, then there were no God.

IV.—The whole question of Foundations derives its importance from this fact,—that, *there are eternal, unalterable Foundations in God.* In Him, is the Rock of ages. Fundamental principles are unchangeable, because they agree, and must for ever agree, with the fundamental being of God. The *ground* of God *is God,* and whether we can apprehend the distinction or not, there is a distinction, expressed by the terms, the Father, and the Son. Both are Eternal, both are One; the Unity is eternal, the distinction is eternal. There could be no *manifested* God, except from the *ground* of God. The manifestation is the Only Begotten outbirth of the Eternal Ground. The Divine manifestation brings the Divine ground out to view. We know the Father from the Son, for He is "Very God *of* Very God." Christ is in the very eternal ground of God, and the very eternal ground is in Him.

"I am in the Father and the Father in Me." Therefore: "He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father." Nor can any creature find the Father, nor come to Him, *except in and through His Son.* "No man cometh unto the Father, *but by Me.*" This is no mere dogma, nor is there any thing arbitrary in it: the law is universal and eternal. The Father, being the inscrutable, ineffable, inapprehensible ground of God, can only make Himself known to the creature in His Son; nor can the creature, in any other way, come home to the bosom of the Father. "The Only Begotten Son *is in the Bosom of the Father.*" To come to Christ, therefore, is to come to the Father, or to the deepest ground of God; and to be rooted and grounded in Christ is the way, and the only way to become rooted and grounded in that *deepest Eternal Ground.* There is nothing hard or narrow in the declaration of St. John: "Whosoever abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, *hath not God.* He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, *he hath both the Father and the Son.*" The law is inevitable. The creature who enters into covenant with God must conform to the order of the Divine Nature.

V.—All creatures in building for Eternity *must build on that which is Eternal.* The only

eternal and unchangeable ground is in God: they must build therefore *on Him*, or build on nothing. But we have seen that there is no other way of coming to this only sure, only Eternal Ground, than by coming to Christ. Remember the words: (for both essential law, and every creature in heaven will justify them; but no creature, nor any single fact will ever be able to correct them:) "No man cometh to the Father *but by Me*." The necessity then of coming to Christ, and of building on Him, is the necessity of having the One and Only Eternal Ground, for *the foundation* of our being and character.

VI.—If the Eternal Being be our foundation, *our being and character will accord with His Being and Character*. For living souls, trusting in, and adhering to, a Living God, are not like dead stones lying on a dead foundation; but like appetite to food, or life to Life. With great desire, God giveth His Life to the souls who are joined to Him, and they on their part, with great desire, receive His Life. It follows therefore, necessarily, that all those who are one with God by faith in Christ Jesus, are slowly but certainly, created anew, in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. In order to build on God at all, we must build on

God *in Christ*, and we must build on God in Christ in order to become *like Him*, and we must be like Him, *or perish.*

VII.—The house that slippeth from its foundations falls into a heap of ruins. If souls swerve from their Eternal Foundation, *Hell is the inevitable consequence.* If there be a movement in the universe contrary to God, if any single creature, or any number of creatures act from their own will and not from the will of God in their will, then *there must be a Hell.* God must be true to Himself. The ground, or foundation of His own Being and Character, is also the foundation of the well-being of the universe. If God were not faithful to Himself, a Heaven would be an impossibility, and Hell would be universal. *God cannot be a little opposed to a thing.* His opposition must be absolute. For He is only opposed to that which is opposed to Himself, and therefore destructive of the foundations of universal order. Whatever is in disharmony with the eternal powers of Godhead *is Hell;*—and if not yet Hell in development, it is still Hell in principle and in germ. If you stand in another will than the One Right Will, you must work and welter in disorder, downtrodden for ever by the Almightiness of God. As soon

as own-will appeared in Heaven, Heaven was threatened, the throne of God was threatened. If any quarter had been given to it God would have sold Himself to rebellion, and given over His universe to hopeless anarchy and misery. If own-will, therefore, will be own-will, *it must be Hell.*

VIII.—From the disorder of Hell, from its wild misery, from its insane and fruitless endeavours, from its unutterable and unknown horrors, let us learn the importance of right foundations and of abiding by them.

IX.—And is not this the great lesson of the Bible from beginning to end? How was Paradise lost? How did the curse break out? How did man become mortal? How did the devil acquire his dominion over man? How did *he* become "prince of the power of the air?" Have not all our human and world-wide woes come from unfaithfulness to the will of God? Unfaithfulness to the will of God is unfaithfulness to the only possible ground of well-being. Why tyrants? wars? calamities? diseases? death? Why has the world been out of tune and full of strife, from the going of Adam and his Eve out of Paradise unto this hour? Do not all things proclaim that the world

has quitted its true foundation? Do not say, foolishly, that the origin of all the evil was a slight offence. The question is, Was it contrary to the Divine Will? If so, it is impossible to measure or calculate the evil.

X.—The last, lowest, and uttermost consequence of unfaithfulness to the will of God, is Christ *crucified.* Pay one visit more to your God manifest in the flesh. See *Him* suffer; hear the thrice-repeated prayer of His agony; see His bloody-sweat, rolling to the ground; see Him die; and then ask: Does it come to this? Besides creating Hell, is unfaithfulness to law an outrage upon God? Does it really cost so much before our human world can be put again upon its true foundations? Now according to the fond conceit of many, that, whether they are on the true, Eternal Foundation or not, they shall come to Heaven at last, because God is good;—they must think that God has taken a great deal of pains about nothing. If they were honest, they would say to God: 'You might have done it all much easier than that.' But is it not much wiser to be instructed by *what God does* than to be led astray by the plausibility of our own foolish hearts? Was not Jesus tempted to sacrifice the Eternal Foundation that was in Him,

to His assumed Humanity? But He sacrificed His assumed Humanity to the Eternal Foundation, and thus founded and established in our nature the Rock which defies all the power of Hell.

1.—Consider that evil, awful evil, awful beyond every thing that words can express, *is come into the universe*, and is evidence enough that the Eternal Foundation of well-being has not been respected.

2.—Christ is set forth by God as the only Foundation of hope. Men sin, suffer, die and perish, because they have lost out of themselves the Foundation of all righteousness and well-being. Christ is no new foundation. He is the *Only* Foundation of well-being from eternity to eternity. He is the centre and foundation of the Divine Nature. If Christ were not in God, God would not be God. In the absolute sense, He is *The Eternal Foundation.* Heaven has no other, can have no other, foundation. All devils have lost Christ. Hell is a world, of which Christ is not the foundation. Hell is society without Christ. Fallen human nature has lost Christ. When any man comes to Christ, as we have already said, he comes home to his Eternal Foundation. "Other Foundation can no man lay than

that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." *There is no other.* It is well written—"He that believeth on Him shall not make haste." The Eternal Foundation groweth up into the soul, and becomes eternal being and life, in every one, that believeth on Him. The believer's rock and the Rock of the Divine Nature are the same. His safety and joy repose on the very eternal ground of all that is God.

"PRECIOUS FAITH."

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ACCORDING to the teaching of the New Testament a poor man is one whose inheritance, whether great or small, is in this world. On the other hand, a rich man is one who is superior to this world's fortune. And the very reason why he cares, comparatively little about his wordly estate, is because *he is a rich man.* He is "rich in faith." Let who will doubt the reality of this wealth, *it is essential wealth.* The doubters are doubters because they are not possessors. No one who has faith doubts his wealth. It is impossible to compare worldly possessions with faith. Faith if it be only as a grain of mustard-seed is a point of *reality*, but the world is vanity. It is not the pious theorist, but the royal experimentalist, the inductive philosopher, who cries out, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." No man is strong, no man is wise, no man is rich compared with the man who has New Testament faith. Faith makes a man at once master of this

world and the heir of Heaven. Words cannot represent the wealth of faith.

II.—*Faith is God's point of contact with the soul.* Hence the creature, *through his faith,* can be made purer, wiser, stronger, nobler, happier, world without end. "All things are possible to him that believeth." For *God* worketh in him, and "with God nothing is impossible." God withholds nothing from faith. He imparts Himself to faith. Abram gives up all for faith; but he finds a greater portion in the God of all. "I am thy exceeding great reward." Abram must receive the sign in his name of countless endless multitude, to teach us that the inheritance of faith is unutterable. Thy name shall be Abra*h*am. The added letter is from Jehovah's Name, teaching us that faith establishes a unity between God and His creature, and therefore opens to the creature infinite resources.

III.—Whatever God in the Gospel of His Dear Son has done *for us,* faith makes *her own.* Jesus has wrought out salvation *for* us, but through our faith that salvation is also wrought out *in* us. Faith keeps a loving, steady eye on Jesus, and while the soul looks to Him, the Holy Spirit traces the same image in the soul's own

eternal life and love. As it is written: "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, *are changed into the same image* from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The soul of faith is love, for faith *cleaves* to Jesus, more and more, and never tires. Faith retires with its Beloved into the very inmost closet of the soul, and protests with joy unspeakable and full of glory, "He is *mine*." His birth, His life, His words, His works, His obedience, His sufferings, His wounds, His death, His resurrection, His ascension, His glorification are *mine*. And all these are very *near* to faith. For the Spirit of the Lord co-operates with faith to bring the things of Christ into the soul:—in a word, to make the bride and the Bridegroom more and more one.

IV.—Well might the Apostle say, "*Precious faith*." It brings another world into this. It opens rivers of consolation in the parched desert. It brings the fruits of Paradise to the soul. It is light in the darkest hour, and peace in the wildest storm. Under deep poverty and tribulation, Jesus whispers in the ear of faith: "*Thou art rich*." "I know thy tribulation and poverty; but thou art rich." Rev. 11. 9. In a world of change and sorrow we want the stay of a strong arm, and the comfort

of an unchangeable sweetness. We find this Strong Arm and this Divine Sweetness in faith.

V.—But this is a world of *shadows* as well as trials. Indeed, how could a *real* world be a tried world? But a world in which the unreal is taken for the real, ought to be a world of sorrow. Change, decay and suffering, which, in an unreal world, are inevitable, are turned to good account: they help man to die to the unreal world, that, by a new birth, he may be brought into the world of faith. Faith saves us from being befooled and ruined in this world of shadows. Faith is the victory which overcometh the world. One beam of absolute truth detecteth the consummate plausibility of "things seen." Faith is such a beam of Truth in the soul. With the ease of an instinct Faith accomplishes, if not the impossibility, the contradiction, of *not looking* at *things seen*, but of *looking* at things *not seen*. Faith is like one who sees not what he sees, because he sees so fully what he sees not. If an inferior thing be visible, and a superior invisible, it is important that there should be in us *some eye*, which shall behold the invisible. Faith is that eye. Our sight blinds us till faith comes. The world is more than a match for the soul, if the light and life of Faith be not there. Through the

senses and the natural affections, the world presses home its claims, and the pleading is so successful, that the soul turns pleader with herself on behalf of the outer life. Do we not want a commanding faith, that we may not be like feathers carried down by the world-stream, but that the stream may sweep against us, around us, and past us, this way and that, but not move us? Faith is the master of the world-tide, for it is anchored to the Rock of Ages. It is the very pillar and ground of Eternal Truth in us. "*Precious* Faith."

THE AUTHOR OF FAITH.

VI.—It is far too precious to be of, or from, ourselves. "It is the gift of God." And weak faith is as much from God as strong faith. The first imperceptible dawn of light is as much from the sun as noon-day. The eye indeed sees, but light is neither of, nor from, the eye. The soul exercises faith, but the faith is *of God*, not of the soul. God gives faith, and then rewards His own gift. God gives to man strength to labour, and then rewards him for his labour as though the strength were his own. God gives, man takes; but God blesses His creature for taking and using His gift. "Abraham believed God and it was ac-

counted to him for righteousness." It *was* righteousness. It was the righteousness which he had received from God, exercised towards God. The Lord has been "The Lord our Righteousness" in all generations. The Righteousness of God is like the great mountains for strength, and it makes the soul "strong in faith" to trust Him from Whom it comes; and it is like the eye of God in the understanding, so that by it the soul pierces the veil and looks upon eternal things; and in the heart it becomes a fountain of purity, constituting that "new heart" which escapes "the corruption that is in the world through lust."

This also is the doctrine of St. Peter in this very connection, not only that the "Divine Power hath *given* unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness," but that we have obtained our faith, "*through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.*" The Righteousness of God is given to *sinners* through Him Who died for sinners. God is Righteous in giving His Righteousness to the *guilty*, because it is given through "that Just One," "Who His own Self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." He took our sin and curse, shame and death, without being entitled to them: so without being entitled to them, His Righteousness and Love, His Glory and Eternal Life are given to

us. The Lord having joined His, to our, nature, the Spirit of Holiness from Him is gone forth into all the earth, and becomes inclination and faith in all those who come unto Him. God, present and working in man to will and to do, is the ground of his willing and believing unto the salvation of his soul. Man can believe in his Saviour, because the Saviour is in his heart, moving and inclining him to believe. "Say not who shall go up to Heaven," &c. Man *can* work out his salvation, *because God is working in him.*

THE PROGRESS OF FAITH.

VII.—*Faith, we repeat, is God's point of contact with the soul.* The soul may have, along with this new relation to God, much weakness and fear. For there must needs be not only much anxiety, but indistinctness of thought and timidity of heart, about the initiation of a sinful spirit into covenant with the Holy, Holy, Holy God. But if it be so with faith, that it is *God's hold upon the soul and the soul's hold upon God,* we cannot wonder at the importance which is attached to Faith. Nor can we wonder at the "exceeding great and precious promises," which are made to Faith. But is it not to be deplored, that faith

should so often be accepted as an end, rather than a great beginning. Following a great beginning, there ought to be a *great progress,* that there may be a *great end.* In Christ, your character has a right and a real beginning. You will never have to repent of, nor to alter, this beginning. Your beginning is truly *for eternity;* for *Christ* is Eternal. He is "All and in all." "It hath pleased the Father that in Him *all fulness* should dwell." All creations and possibilities are in Him, and from Him. "If you have received Christ Jesus the Lord," do not stand still,—"*walk in Him.*" Faith is but the starting-post of your race: you must keep the race-course, "forgetting those things which are behind and *reaching forth unto those things which are before,*" if you mean to win "the prize." According to another figure; Faith is not your eternal house, but the first stone thereof on the Foundation, Jesus Christ: you must go on to build up your house, and you must take heed, what you build, and how you build, thereupon. Or, to take another figure, if by faith you are a branch of the True Vine, you must *grow,* or you will die. You must receive life from the Vine and bring forth fruit thereby; for every branch in God's Vine that beareth not fruit He taketh away. But if you are a life-deriving, fruit-

bearing branch, then rejoice and be exceeding glad, for all your growth is *eternal growth.* The reward of a right beginning is that it carries in itself the germ of the right and good end. If you are rooted in Christ, the top of your tree, the very height of endless life, is already hidden in your root. If you are rooted in Christ, are you not rooted in all the holy powers of God and of eternity? The longer these holy powers are in you, the more they will be rooted in you, and you in them; and, consequently, the more strongly they will hold you. For these holy powers grow in the soul and become another nature, called also the "new creature." Faith in Christ is life in Christ, and this new life forms a new nature, and the new nature becomes a chain of God binding the person to Christ, his Life-Source. The chain *of God* is a "perfect law of liberty." For the chain of God is no other than *a nature,* whose tendencies and inclinations are at one with all the commands and drawings of God.

But there is much to be done before we come to "the perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." We are "complete *in Him:*" but by little and little we must derive His completeness until it becomes also *our own personal completeness.*

The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of St. Peter, exhorts believers, not to be mere believers; but with "*all diligence*" to superadd to their faith every mental and moral adorning. And with reason; for if Faith joins together God and man what ought not, and what may not, man become? Faith is the commencement in a fallen creature of the Life of God. The faith therefore which is "of the operation of God" *will espouse, through its own affinities, every excellence, and grow unto universal charity.*

"Beside this, giving all diligence,
Add to your Faith, Virtue;
And to Virtue, Knowledge;
And to Knowledge, Temperance;
And to Temperance, Patience;
And to Patience, Godliness;
And to Godliness, Brotherly-kindness;
And to Brotherly-kindness, Charity." 2 Pet. I. 5, 7.

1.—"*Add to your faith, Virtue.*"—It is the glory of the Gospel that it not only apprehends persons of no character, but multitudes who have a decidedly bad character. The lowest and the worst may find "peace and joy in believing." But let none think that to leave off their old sins and to believe in Christ, are the whole calling of

God. Their faith is all-important, but let them take heed to add thereto *moral excellence.* Virtue comprehends every element and constituent of an unblemished and manly character. Faith relates the soul to God, Virtue, to God and *to the world.* Faith is both too simple and too hidden for human appreciation: Virtue commands the reverence of all. Christ teaches the children of faith that they should clothe their hidden life with "good works" that *the world* may see, admire and give glory to God. Add to your faith, sterling worth. Be men of principle, and of *strong* principle. Combine correctness and strength. Sacrifice every thing to truth; sacrifice truth to nothing. Virtue is both valor and habit in right-doing. It *abhors* evil, and *cleaves* to that which is good. By a noble instinct, it observes the utmost distance from all vice and dishonor, and walks in indissoluble bonds with Purity, Honesty and Goodness. The spirit of uncleanness often lurks under worldly purity, and the spirit of fraud under legal, or worldly honesty. But true Virtue will be chaste and honest from an inward necessity, and not for the sake of a reputation. Virtue turns away with disgust from every species of deceit as from the slimy trail of that old serpent, the devil. Virtue would rather suffer for sincerity, candour, openness, than win a throne by

dissimulation. Virtue disdains to employ base and questionable means to secure a good end. It abhors the maxim that "the end justifies the means." Virtue is more than worldly justice: it is like Divine Justice, full of all *Goodness*. It is a very cold thing simply to respect *the rights* of others. Virtue will render to all their due; and, beside that, will find her own joy in working, or even in suffering for their happiness.

It is notorious that, *so called*, Christians often fail to associate full-orbed Virtue with their Faith, and thereby expose Christianity to the contempt of the world. Christians should attest the genuineness of their Faith, by the splendour of their Virtue; and shew the world that where Faith is, there also all excellences will cluster and flourish. As Faith conjoins them with the Lord of men and of angels, they should certainly conjoin with their Faith every human and heavenly grace. Hear St. Paul, as well as St. Peter: "Brethren, whatsoever things are *true*, whatsoever things are *honest*, whatsoever things are *just*, whatsoever things are *pure*, whatsoever things are *lovely*, whatsoever things are of *good report*;—if there be *any Virtue*, and if there be *any praise*, think on these things." In other words, "giving all diligence add to your Faith" every Virtue, every thing that God commands, or that men praise.

2.—*To Virtue add Knowledge.*—Let your new-born soul be like a flower opening to the light. What is your loyalty worth if you are not concerned to honor and glorify your King? If by faith you are *the Lord's*, can your heart be too pure, can your character be too noble, can your soul be too full of light? Many books are not necessary to spiritual enlargement. *Think* more than you *read.* Thinking expands the soul from within. Laborious readers stuff, cram and cumber their souls, and rob them of all their elasticity. To eat more than is digested hurts the eater. Great readers, often, only confuse their minds; and are like bats wandering to and fro in their own dusky element. Immortal authors, whose books are as fresh for this generation as for the century in which they were written, were not themselves great devourers of books. They soliloquized much. They interrogated nature, and nature's own réplies arose in their souls. They conversed with streams and clouds, with trees and birds, with night and morning. They were *observers.* Nature rewards the love and patience of her observers, by enriching them with her own variety. Should Christians be less observant of nature than other men? Who was it said: "*Consider* the lilies?"

Nature is a great book, but human nature is a greater. Read *men.* What novelty, variety and

mystery are here! It is an endless book. Rather, every individual man is a new volume with a new title page, a new table of contents, a new arrangement and a new development of nature and humanity, of heaven, earth and hell. A duplicate man you will not find. Acquire the habit of reading men, and you will never be without a new book.

Your books, like your trusty friends, should be well-selected and few. In reading the books of master-spirits, enter into the spirit from which they were written, and more will be given to you than the book expresses. The purest wisdom refuses to be imprisoned in words. Yet as visible sacraments help you to apprehend things invisible; so do the words of the wise help you by what is expressed, to apprehend the inexpressible. Above all is *the Book of God.* Many worlds meet thee there,—a past world, a future world, a demon-world, an angel-world, and the awful World of the Divine Nature. Come to the Book with penitence, humility, wonder and worship. Come not to judge it, but to be judged. Come to it not for words only, but for life, for the Book is insphered in a universe of "spirit and life."

The Book of God will lead you to the book of your own soul. Study your own invisible world.

Science, art, literature, all works and enterprises, all crimes and virtues, are but partial hints of that vast, manifold, heaven-and-hell world, that hides itself in every human breast. Explore this eternal world. Stand still, and search yourself, and you will soon stand in awe of yourself.

Self-converse leads, in the most direct way, to converse with God,—the Great, All-pervading Presence. If fellowship with the great makes great, then fellowship with the Greatest must be the condition of our utmost enlargement. Walk and talk with God, (for this is the peculiar life of Faith,) and His Gentleness will make you great. Like the air, God, the Father of Spirits, is open to you on all sides. Lie open to Him. As your lungs commune with the atmosphere, so let your Faith and Love commune with God. Desire Him, in the Name of Jesus, and by your desire as by an open door, He will enter into you with His quickening, ennobling energy.

The aim of the natural man is to know more of the things which he sees: a Christian's aim should be to know more of those things *in which he believes.* If they are worthy to be apprehended by Faith, they are worthy to be known. But the objects of Faith are too great and wonderful for our understandings. Yes, and for that very reason,

we should, like the angels of God, look with the greater desire into those things. If we love much, we shall look much, and, if we love and look much, we shall know much. Those know God, and Divine things best, who possess most of His Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the very soul of knowledge. God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all. He that loves God has God. And "unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance." And abundance here, is an abundance of Life. "This is Eternal Life, to know Thee the Only True God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent."

3.—*To Knowledge add Temperance,* (Ἐγκράτεια) *self-control.*—If knowledge does not lead to self-government it is but the aggravation of a fool's folly. "If you know these things, happy are ye *if you do them.*" Let your well-instructed mind hold your passions in subjection, with all authority. Accustom your appetites to obedience: let them never dictate to you. Command them as servants and they will be useful: otherwise, *if they rule,* they will bring the master to disgrace and ruin. You need not maim your nature, nor quench your passions. To your outward nature God has adapted an outward world, and you cannot with impunity

violate this covenant. Cut yourself off from lawful pleasures, and the day will come that nature will make a rush, and you will be driven to unlawful pleasures. A merciful man is merciful to his beast. Many a man, yea many a prince in Israel, from practising unnecessary severity, has become the slave of his beast. Christianity is not asceticism. "Be temperate *in all things.*" Temperance is greater than abstinence. To ride the beast requires more skill than to starve, or to kill him. Temperance makes a genial soul, abstinence makes a dry soul. Be neither haughty, nor stingy, towards your inferior nature: be a *good* master. Because ungoverned heat would destroy all things, it will never do to banish heat out of Nature. It is not wise for man to shut up his body in a cell, for that does not get rid of his body. And when he does come abroad to face God's world and God's creatures, he will, from long disuse, find it very awkward work to manage his unfettered senses.

There is a golden mean between the passions ravaging, and the passions abjured. This golden mean is the walk of Temperance. What nobler sight is there upon earth, than a man cheerfully sharing in outward good, and yet manfully controlling himself in the use of it.

A wise man will be temperate not only in the

use of natural, but also of *spiritual delights.* Excess in any thing is not good. Peter, James and John requested that they might *abide* on the mount of Transfiguration; but Christ suffered them not even *to linger* so near Heaven. St. Paul was *once* caught up into the third Heavens, but we hear of no repetition of his ecstasy. The heights of truth are intoxicating; and intense joy in God, if continued, would relax the powers of soul and body. Spiritual delight should not be indulged in as an end, but accepted as an incentive to service. An intemperate saint is the slave of his religious joy. There is a Divine Temperance which commands even spiritual pleasure. "The spirits of the prophets *are subject to the prophets.*" The Lord of men and of angels is the Lord of His own glory and joy. When His humiliation, His bitterness of soul, His personal encounter with sin and Hell were required, as the condition, or price of greater good to His creatures, Heaven was no Heaven to Him, His glory no glory, His joy no joy, till He could say of His dreadful work: "It is finished" The master-spirit of self-command must be sought from Him, from Whom cometh every thing wise, every thing good, every thing strong.

4.—*To Temperance add Patience.*—Both the

heart and the reason of nature lead us to pray for deliverance from sorrow. The Spirit of the Master commends to us *Patience in sorrow.* The Christian who believes in Jesus Christ, and *Him crucified,* should never be confounded by sorrow. Trouble in an *evil world* can never be a strange thing. A Christian should calculate upon sorrow. Times of trouble are peculiarly the work-days of God, that He may bring about the rest of eternity. How could there be patient spirits if there were not tried spirits? "Let patience then have her perfect work *that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*" If God is with us under our woes, as a "very present Help," and working out of them our future glory, should we not learn to possess our souls in patience? It is only in patience that we can be said to *possess* our souls. An impatient man squanders his own strength, and *dis*possesseth himself of his own soul. A patient spirit is God's throne. But an impatient man loses God and himself too.

And surely the New Testament is very distinct on this head,—that there is a relation between the present sufferings and the future glory of Christians. The heaviest affliction is said to be "light," and the longest, "but for a moment," in comparison with that "far more exceeding and eternal weight

of glory" which it "worketh for us." The heavier our trials, the more fatal are they to our two great enemies,—self-love and the love of the world. Under the same bitter process, these evil roots are killed, and the love of God and of the better world is quickened in us and made strong. The painfullest part of our discipline is what we could least do without. "Be still and know that I am God." When with silence and patience we endure our cross, we are then giving the holy world an opportunity to root and ground itself within us. The furnace improves the gold, the storm roots the oak, labor strengthens the body, suffering brings to the eternal soul her best and purest revenues. If quiet inward power, meek manfulness, and essential glory grow and thrive under conflict and sorrow, must we not "count it all joy" when seasons are given to us for the exercise of Divine Patience? Has not one child of Faith nobly said, for all the children of Faith: "We glory in tribulations, *knowing that tribulation worketh Patience?*"

Let us rule valiantly, but let us also *endure valiantly.* Let the dark, the bitter, the hostile neither anger nor fret us. The greater our woes, the more let us expect from them; for the ways of God are equal. He can either remove our burdens or give us strength to carry them. We cannot

have the same eternal result in our souls from days of ease, as from the patient endurance of trial. The still, divine, inmost strength, which God gives us to bear our cross, will survive our cross. After a few days our sorrows will be no more; but the fruit of them will abide with us for ever.

Let infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses, therefore, awaken in us valor and constancy. Let us shew that we have a God. In agitating circumstances, let us be calm "in the power of His might." When the men of nature are alarmed, let us be the more collected and self-possessed, for the glory of His Name. Under the worst that can happen to us, let us pray that the calm strength and glory of the Master may be as conspicuous in us, as light when it breaks through dark clouds of the sky.

5.—*To Patience add Godliness.*—We come now to a great word. Who can speak it? Godliness includes all the foregoing and something more. There must be faith; there must be moral excellence; there must be Divine knowledge; the appetites and passions must be under enlightened rule; there must be the power of calm endurance; and besides all these there must be the spontaneous action of the soul towards God. Godliness, it is

the heart-beat of the new creature. Like the circulation of the blood in the body, which is a hidden thing, and yet fundamental to all its functions and motions; so is Godliness the hidden circulation of the Divine, in the human, spirit, but fundamental to every Christian Virtue. It is much more than obedience. Obedience is the fruit, of which Godliness is the ground. It is more than a covenant between God and man. By faith, the creature stands in a covenant-relation with God. But Godliness is *the harmony of the Divine and human will.* What Friendship is between man and man that Godliness is between man and God. Friendship not only knows and reveres its object, but finds heart-rest in the presence of its object.

Godliness is the consciousness of the beautiful Atonement brought home to the soul, through which it *rejoices in God,* through the Lord Jesus Christ. Godliness is *sincerity* towards God grounded in the devotion of the inmost affections. All the springs of Godliness are in God. It is Godlikeness; and therefore it is *freedom with God.* Between bosom friends cold ceremony is dispensed with. Whatever they are with others, with each other they are simple, they are natural, they are at home, they speak out of their hearts and they speak all their hearts. Their muscles play, and their eyes

speak, in perfect unison with the deep that lieth under. And such is Godliness. The man who is conscious of the truthfulness of his relation to God disdains to assume any thing before Him. He knows nothing of bondage, or guile, in the presence of his God. What he is, he appears: what he feels, he speaks. As the wild-bird in the forest, as the lamb in the meadow, as the child with his father, so is he with his God. But as nature knows nothing about leaping by a single step from the crude buds of spring to the ripe fruits of autumn; neither can the soul by a sudden transition pass from young faith to mellow Godliness. It is a slow growth. But "to patient faith the prize is sure." Let us not grow weary in well-doing, and in due time we shall come to the sunny maturity of our life in God.

6.—*To Godliness, add Brotherly-kindness.*—Must we then have Faith, and Virtue, and Knowledge, and Temperance, and Patience, and Godliness, before we can shew forth the heavenly grace of Brotherly-Love? Even so. And therefore there is so little brotherly-love in the Church. We can pray solemnly and do great works, we can teach and contend for the faith, we can give generously and shew great zeal for God, we can control our

passions and suffer patiently, sooner than we can love each other with pure hearts and fervently. If brotherly-love were the love of our fellow-members for our own sakes, we could find that; but love to them for the Lord's sake and their own sakes is not to be met with every day. It is something added even to Godliness; for it is easier for the soul to move freely towards God than towards His erring children. But God will not endorse our Godliness until it gives proof of itself in unfeigned love to the brethren. Every sincere and loving child of God must become a sincere and loving brother. To love our fellow Christians because they are like us, or because they agree with us, is but Self-love, not Brotherly-love. Very little brotherly-love is possible in a divided Church. We must be careful, therefore, that the divisions of Christendom have not a place in our heart. If our affections are subject to the limits of our creed, or of our own denomination, or of any human compact, it will happen that we shall exclude from our sympathy many true brethren of Christ, and on the other hand embrace "false brethren" because they belong to *our party*. Brotherly-love does not consist in loving those who follow with us and in disliking those who follow not with us. Brotherly-love is love to men *because they are Christ's*. If we desire

to bring any one into bondage to *our* views, or to *our* forms of worship, or methods of labor, it shews that our own spirit, rather than the Spirit of Christ, is Lord over us. "Who art thou that judgest thy brother?" His Lord and thy Lord requires thee not to judge him, but to *love him.* Follow *thou* the Master. And leave John to follow the Master, not according to thy liberty, but according to the liberty which the Master gives *to him.* He is the Lord's freeman. If he has less freedom than thou hast, *love him;* if he has greater, *love him;* if he is a strong brother, *love him;* if he is a weak brother, *love him.* Love will work no ill to him. The difference between thee and him may be as great as that between Romanist and Quaker, but perhaps he adheres to thy Lord quite as much as thou dost. Beware that thou judge him not. *Love him.* Brotherly-love should unite East and West; for the same sun which rises in the East visits also the West. In the morning, the East has more light, in the evening, the West has more. At noon-day, East and West are equal. It remains yet for Brotherly-love to bring about the noon-day of the Church.

Christians are but "one family." But when shall the wars of this family cease? Whenever, instead of loving their own moonlight reflection of

the Lord's glory, they mutually love each other because they mutually love "One Lord," then wars will cease in the Church. At present the love of the Church is partial, dubious, cold, for the moon reigns. The Church must get the moon under her feet and be clothed with the sun, before Brotherly-love can triumph. And the triumph of Brotherly-love is *her triumph.*

But beware; we cannot make Brotherly-love. We can make confederacies and alliances, and cherish the conceit that we have the Master's sympathy for *our* unity. But "the Unity of the Spirit" will not submit to the yoke of *our* unity. We may make laws and limits for our own hearts, but the Lord will not observe them. We shall find many outside *our* circle walking in the Lord's "free spirit." All the Brotherly-love that ever will exist, already exists in its Source. Let us receive it. Its manifestation will follow. We must not play the lord over *It*, we must allow *It* to be Lord over all our prejudices and partialities, that by breaking up our old limits, It may reveal in us Its own "breadth and length, and depth and height." How can we love all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ, except in the breadth of His own Love?

7.—*To Brotherly-love add Love.*—There is yet a higher, greater love than the love of the heavenly-Brotherhood, namely, *the love of all,* including the unthankful and the evil. Brotherly-love is a restrictive grace: Love is boundless. God has set us an example of loving men not because they are good, but because being evil, they the more need our love. Brotherly-love is the natural affection of the new nature; but "the great Love wherewith God loved us even when we were dead in sins" is the Divine triumph of Divine Love. And Christians are exhorted, over and above all things, to put on this Love, that they may be perfect as their Father in Heaven is perfect. Faith and Love make one as the foundation and head-stone of a building, or as seed-time and harvest. As the seed sown, develops, and develops until the broad acres wave in golden glory, even so Faith develops into the eternal reign of Love. Love is the glorious crown of a glorious character. Love gives sterling value to all the graces. Without love they are nothing worth. Faith avails nothing, Knowledge avails nothing, Virtue avails nothing, heroic Patience avails nothing, Self-sacrifice avails nothing, if Love be not the soul and spring of all.

The difference between what is called a

righteous man and a good man, or a merely consistent man and a loving man, is as the difference between a cold sun shining on a snow-covered landscape, and the summer sun shining on a garden of sweet-breathing flowers. There are people whom you can never blame, and yet, whom you can never love. A merely righteous man never relaxes. He reminds you of a corpse in white garments. His muscles are like his faith and deportment,—*rigid.* A good man reminds you of the free, easy and unworldly countenance of a child. In that elder brother, whom sin had never broken, nor love ever warmed, and who would not go into the house of love, we have the type, and hear the cold, querulous tone of the strictly righteous man. What love is, we see in the meeting of the Father and His prodigal. It will be found in the end that the merely righteous man has not the Righteousness of God. The righteousness that obeys not the law of Love *is nothing.* Though I have Faith to remove mountains, and the knowledge of an angel, and the zeal of a martyr, "and have not Love, *I am nothing.*" Love is the essence of God. It is therefore the beginning and the end of creation. The Heaven unto which the creatures of God are ever, and evermore coming, is the life of perfect love. All

the Divine Perfections meet in Love and are Love. Light is great, but Love is greater. The unapproachable Light in which God dwells is but the radiation of His Love. The commandments of God are one, and, like His own nature, "exceeding broad." "God is Love." His commandment is Love. When Love has established His empire in the soul, it seemeth to the soul that she carries God in her bosom, and the universe in her arms, pressed to that bosom wherein God dwelleth. Nor is this seeming; for, "He that dwelleth in love *dwelleth in God, and God in him.*" The creature, in whom the Love of God is perfected, is, as it were, an atom in the midst of universal being, reflecting the image of the universal God. He is the child, the little one of the Almighty, with the Love of the Eternal Father pulsating through his heart.

MAKE SURE YOUR ELECTION.

VIII.—Make your calling sure, and your election is sure. As a tree is known by its fruits, Faith is known by what it brings forth. The Faith of God generates a Godlike character. If you have "the Faith of God's elect," you shall surely have the eternal inheritance of His elect. A

barren and unfruitful faith gives no evidence that it is the Faith of God. "If these things," (Faith, Virtue, &c., &c., &c.,) "be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

1.—"If the law of the Spirit of Life which is in Christ Jesus" be operative in a man's faith, it will produce the Virtues which have passed under review. They are in perfection in our Divine Adam. If they do not re-appear in His followers, then His followers are not following Him in the *re*generation. They are not *His race.* They have no *living* connection with Him. Their knowledge of Him is unproductive. A fruitless knowledge of Christ is useless knowledge. To know Christ is to know and feel the power of His risen life in the soul. The power of Christ is the life of Faith. The power of Christ through faith brings forth in the soul the character of Christ. But he that lacketh the Spirit, and the Virtues of Christ, is a poor blind believer, who does not at all see the scope and purpose of faith in Christ. His faith must be of his own fallen nature, and not *of God,*

if it does not generate in him "the new man."

2.—Faith is not dead trust in Christ, but diligent co-operation with Him, in the great work of perfecting our nature. Has not Christ through death purged away our sins, and brought not the old, but the new man into Heavenly places? How then can we say that we have faith in Him, if we abide in our old character, and put not on the Divine character? Our first man is according to nature, but the new man is according to the Power of God Which raised Christ from the dead. How can faith in Christ, overlook the very end for which Christ died and rose again? Are we looking for the salvation *of* fallen nature? or salvation *from* fallen nature by Death and Resurrection? In order to be God's elect, we must have "the faith of God's elect," that it may bring forth in us the elect character. In the first place, Jesus is God's elect. He has chosen Him and set Him at His own right hand. "This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well-pleased." "Behold, I lay in Zion a Chief Corner Stone, Elect, Precious." His Humanity is the elect beginning and foundation of elect mankind, for He hath put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself and made Human Nature in Himself, immaculate and Divine. And Faith,

by uniting us to Christ, makes us partakers of Christ, and thus, the elect of God. From Eternity, God has been what He now is, and unto Eternity, He will be the same. The elect of God therefore are the same character for ever. "Wherefore brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

3.—Herein is a marvellous thing, *that man should make sure his election of God.* But is it not so, that in order to every effect and change in man, God and man must work *as one?* God is the Author and the Finisher of faith; but in order thereto man must himself believe, and continue steadfast in the faith. God gives to man the Spirit of obedience, and yet, in order to have this Spirit, he must himself obey. The motion of God's Spirit in the heart is the soul of all Virtue; and yet man must himself practise and cultivate Virtue, otherwise he will have no Virtue. Divine Knowledge is from "the unction of the Holy One;" but man must himself love knowledge and seek after it as for hid treasure, or he will not be the subject of the unction. Jesus must lay the hand of His Holy Humanity upon our lusts and passions in order to subdue them unto Himself; yet must we ourselves carefully and prayerfully exercise self-

control, or our old man, and not Christ, will be lord over us. Patience is the work of the Lamb of God in us, and yet we must fight against our own impatience, or "the Patience of Christ" will never be wrought in us. Brotherly-love is the Love of Christ in us, towards the members of His Body; but we must ourselves fight against self-love or it will never be supplanted by Brotherly-love. "Love is of God;" and yet we must abandon ourselves to Love, and die into Love, and wish above all things to be created anew by Love and inspired by Love; otherwise we shall never be the organs of Love. It is then indeed true that we must "*give diligence* to make our calling and election sure."

4.—The subject is really simple:—In Adam we are dead, in Christ we are made alive unto Eternal Life. To be in Christ is to be elect: not in Christ, not elect. Who are in Christ? all those who wish to be and who strive to be. If all those can read, who have, themselves by their own patient perseverance, acquired the art of reading; and if only those cannot read who have not been at the pains to learn, can the latter complain that God has not given them the art of reading? If those have the prospect of a Harvest, who have done their part to secure it; and if those have no

such prospect, who have neither ploughed nor sown, can the latter reflect on God that He has done more for their neighbours than for them? Did a soul ever yet use all diligence "to win Christ and to be found in Him," and come short of the election of God?

Do not all the elect come to Christ, and walk by one rule? Col. iii. 12—15. Can any one walk according to this rule and not be elect? And can any one be hindered from coming to Christ and walking by this rule, except by his own will. The non-elect then will be able to complain only *of themselves*, that they had no will to do what the elect did, that they might be elect. The choice of God is as unchangeable as His own Being and Character. He cannot choose what is contrary, or hostile to His own nature: He cannot but choose what is like Himself. He has chosen us therefore *in Christ;* and wherefore? "that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." For if we are "*in Christ*" we shall become so; but if we are not in Christ we cannot become so. What remains then but to say: "*Whosoever will*, let him take the water of Life freely." Those who *will not*, will have no ground of complaint against Christ; but *His* complaint against them, already stands written: "*Ye will not* come to Me that ye might

have Life." "*You might have Life.*" There is no holding back with God: His Son is universal Life-giver. And whoever receives the Life of Christ, receives the motive and tendency to every virtue, possible in earth or heaven.

THE END OF FAITH.

IX.—It is undeniable that the Apostle submits the golden chain of Faith, as the rule by which we may make our election *sure*, declaring: "If ye do these things ye shall never fall; *for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*" True faith initiates man into the kingdom of Heaven, invests him with its power, and makes him an associate of innumerable angels, and the departed spirits of just men. He is compassed about with his invisible friends, who take an intense interest in the fight and victory of his faith. If "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth," with what enthusiasm must they regard the heroes of faith! How the world watches, honors and rewards *its* heroes! But much more the kingdom of Heaven watches, and will honor and reward *its* heroes. The heroism of faith is of an incomparably

higher character than the heroism of animal spirits and muscles. The martial hero is helped by his passions and senses; but the heroes of faith in spite of the opposition of their own senses and passions. The heroes of faith are the calm masters of three worlds,—namely, of their own nature, of the sensible world, and of the invisible world of fallen spirits. Without doubt a glorious reception awaits them into their own kingdom, and amongst their own kindred. We talk about the honors of worldly heroes; but to see men *honored* we must wait till we see how Heaven will honor those who have fought the good fight of faith. Their royal virtues are the princely chain which hangs from their neck. The inwrought majesty of their character is an everlasting crown upon their heads. Their meek but brave purity, acquired in a world of corruption, and in an unclean and a deceitful heart; their self-conquest, by self-abasement; their Divine Patience, prayed into their souls when their whole being was, at the very time, struggling and heaving to break out into impatience; their Godliness begotten in them by the Holy Ghost through their own willing death unto sin; above all, their glorious Love obtained through the subjugation of self-love: these are their honors, and for these they shall also be

honored. God *will* honor them, "Them that honor Me, I will honor." All Heaven will honor them too. As many as, in the world, live not to the world, but to Heaven, and for Heaven, what honor shall they not receive on their arrival in their own Country! Imagine the entrance into Heaven of those whom Heaven is concerned to honor. After what manner will the hosts of saints and angels welcome them to their Hearts and Homes for ever? Great is the distinction between a mere reception and a *great reception.* Many who look not for it, shall meet with such a reception. For the patient, humble heroes of faith know not that they are heroes; their lament is that their characters and works are so unworthy of their faith. But when they find themselves not only entering into Glory, but received with triumph by so great multitudes, with banners and Hallelujahs; then shall they remember that it was written: "An entrance shall be ministered unto you *abundantly* into the Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." And then shall they confess: "Howbeit we believed not the words, until we came, and our eyes have seen; and behold the half was not told us."

AIDS TO THOUGHT.

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MAN is not, and never can be his own foundation. Not only a man's works cannot stand, but *he cannot be saved,* on the foundation of his own nature. It will be bad enough if we lose the works which we have wrought in time; but we shall ourselves be lost, if the Nature of God's Dear Son be not grounded and settled in us. Jesus is "the Beginning of the Creation of God."

But many are on the right foundation, who are building upon it only a time-work. Good heed must be taken therefore lest the building, which we rear upon God's Foundation, should not correspond with the Foundation. That which is begun in "the Power of God and the Wisdom of God," may easily be carried on according to the wisdom of men. The wisdom that is according to men is far more attractive to the natural understanding than the wisdom of God.

We are in great danger of acquiring characters and of doing works, in relation rather to the estima-

tion of the present world, than to their standing in Eternity.

When the inmost principle of every man's work is laid bare, it will be found that many who were thought to be great characters will lose their pre-eminence, while those who in the world were supposed to be greatly inferior, will have the pre-eminence. The day cometh which will try every man's *work* of what sort it is. The searching fire of Eternity will consume all *appearances*. Only the works which have been done *in God*, will be able to stand before God. How needful that both we and our works should be "baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire," that we and they may pass through the fire of God, and thus abide for ever in His Presence. Many a soul will be saved, whose whole work will be lost. "The Foundation of God standeth sure." *It* cannot be destroyed. Neither can the soul perish in whom is that Foundation, but he may suffer the loss of all the works which he has done in the body. Wherefore: "Look to yourselves, that you lose not those things which you have wrought, but that you receive *a full reward*."

Is it not strange that by thoughts about God,

Satan should help man to continue in a life contrary to God? The Devil preaches up God's mercy in such a way as most effectually to separate the soul from the Divine Mercy. Thus, and thus, preaches the great Deceiver: "God is so good, so merciful, that He will never turn a poor creature from His door. Take your pleasure a little longer, you will turn to Him by and by." The soul likes the preaching, and has not the sense to say: 'This is the devil preaching to me God's mercy.' But whence, except from Hell, could a soul be detained one moment from falling at the feet of God?

There is then a plausible and an ensnaring hope, in which lies secreted the second death. And this has been Satan's method from the beginning, to carry on his deadly operations under the cover of that which is fair to look upon, and pleasant to the soul.

The hope that is of God has God in it, and carries in its bosom the germ of holy heaven. Satan insinuates a hope, which dispenses with a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness. And by beguiling the soul from "the Way of Holiness," effectually cuts it off from "the end, everlasting life."

THERE is nothing monotonous in love to God.

It is by no means a lonely affection. It includes every thing which is good and lovely. Love to God excludes no delight which does not exclude Him. In loving all creatures, and finding pleasure in all created things, we only do what God does. "The Lord rejoices in His works." "*For Thy pleasure* they are and were created."

We shall find variety enough in God to entertain us. His Wisdom has no limits; His Love, no limits; His Beauty is not exhaustible. The sameness of God is that which, *to all creatures*, will be eternally new. His infiniteness is quite adequate both to re*new* us, and to give forth new manifestations of Himself for evermore. Our endless praise will have in it an endless freshness, for it will spring forth from ever fresh powers and affections.

We must not suppose that endless praise is the endless use of words. Praise re-invigorates itself by silence,—grows deeper and fuller by silence.

You really think, do you, that the Heaven of God and His holy ones consists in not being touched, nor affected by the follies, sins and miseries of His creatures? Why then was an angel sent

to set a mark on the men who sighed and cried for the evils that were done around them? Was it because they were not, or because they were, in sympathy with Holy God and holy heaven? I tell you plainly that a Heaven of Indifference, moving for ever in the circle of its own satisfactions, and not grieving for the evils and sorrows of others, is not a Heaven that I can respect. God, in the Man of sorrows, teaches me a very different lesson about God and His heaven. I fancy your conception will be found to be that of some sublime Hindoo heaven, and not at all of a Christian Heaven. Know you not that *Jesus* was crucified, because in spirit *God had been* crucified from the foundation of the world? The fallen universe is God's Cross; and all Heaven is in sympathy with Him. God's joy and rest *in Himself* have never been disturbed, but His joy and rest in His creation have been greatly disturbed, yea changed into sorrow and labor. The manifestation of God in Heaven, quite as much as on earth, is Innocence, suffering, and "as it had been slain."

ARE Hindoos more deeply devoted to *their* idolatry than Englishmen are to *theirs?* If

Englishmen could abandon the worship and service of the only living idol, they would find it comparatively easy to get the Heathen to cast their dead idols to the moles and to the bats. But if the authority of the grand idol, (self,) were to be repudiated in favor of pure Christianity, (self-sacrifice,) what would become of English society? From centre to circumference, would it not break up, and be no more? Is not the British Empire as grand and proud a development of self-will, as the world ever saw? If self-will were slain, English society would be found, (in much the same condition as a man with his back bone taken out,) not bordering on chaos, but chaos itself. It would be Genesis over again: "In the beginning English society was without form and void." I will not bring down on me the curses of all Englishmen, by saying, that a totally new beginning of this sort is desirable; and yet if one had the opportunity, it might be well to whisper into the ear of each, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, thine own self-will is the bar that threatens to separate thee from the Life of Jesus, which is the Eternal Life.

WHOLESOME fruits and deadly poisons have

in them the same properties; but they differ in their *proportions.* If the proportions are right the thing is good: if the proportions are wrong the thing is evil.

ASHES are born in the fire: yet nothing presents greater resistance to fire, or will quench it sooner. Query: Is not all matter *spirit-born?* yet it is matter that resists *and quenches spirit.*

"NATIONAL literature is now rather an unmeaning term; the epoch of World-Literature is at hand, and every one must strive to hasten its approach."

THE three methods of relieving the spirit from the dominion of the flesh.

1.—"Sow your wild oats." Let the flesh have its day. In due time sensualism will exhaust its resources. The worn-out flesh will give up the ghost, and the noble soul, delivered from her base partner, will be free to pursue her own purer life.

2.—Give your flesh no quarter. Indulgence will feed its strength.

3.—"*Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.*"

The first prescription has great authority, (namely, that of the world, the flesh and the devil,) but it is positively bad. There is some truth in it, but a lie is hidden in the truth. It is quite true that the indulgence of the flesh will weaken, and, in the end, destroy it; but it is also true that the spirit which yields to the government of the flesh, will be an earthly, fleshly spirit, when the flesh is dead. The flesh does not indulge itself *from itself*, but from the spirit. The spirit indulges *itself*, by the flesh. If the spirit *by nature* is carnal and at enmity with God, and hence a child of wrath, at the end of a carnal life it must be *confirmed* in its carnality, and, therefore, be more fixedly at enmity with God, and, therefore, more utterly a child of wrath.

If the second prescription is better, it is, nevertheless, altogether inadequate. Force may suppress, but it does not convert. A living power suppressed, secretly accumulates energy.

The third prescription says nothing about either indulging or restraining the flesh; but proposes a *new life*. a new sphere for the spirit. Find

occupation for your spirit in a world that is above the flesh. You have a spirit, inquire for its own kingdom, enter it, and become a citizen. Enter it again and again, walk in it, and by degrees, new tastes, and indeed a new nature, will grow in your spirit, corresponding with the new world in which you live and walk. You will find less and less difficulty, in abstaining from the lusts of the flesh. Another class of affections will be awakened in you, and a higher class, and inferior desires will abate. Your chastened spirit will be powerfully drawn to its own satisfactions, and will not only not consent to the violent solicitations of the flesh, but the flesh itself, under the calm, subduing influence of your purer spirit, will become a dignified servant in waiting upon its superior.

Good gardeners know a better way of conquering the wild thorn than by uprooting and destroying it, namely, by setting it in their garden and inoculating it with some queenly rose, by which it expends its energy not upon itself, but contributes it to that which is above itself; and, as a reward, is crowned with a glory which it could not produce.

THE NEEDED MAN, FOUND.

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THE Lord sought a man, and found him. He sought a man to fill a certain post, and to do a certain work in his generation; and who should also be a spirit of inspiration and a mouth of utterance for all generations. The Lord sought such an one, and found him. "I have found David." "And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him, for this is he." Perhaps the man that is really wanted, (not the man, it may be, that we think is wanted,) is always at hand. Perhaps it is due to the infinite resources of God that the thing that is absolutely needed shall never be wanting.

II.—I will not say, how great this man *was*, but how great he *is!* God chose him for a great purpose, and he has fulfilled a great purpose. Every age has justified God's choice. Think of it, that innumerable souls in their most soul-like experience, should be associated with this one man. There was nothing arbitrary in God's choice. He

was chosen, because he was fitted, to this distinction. The Lord said to Samuel: "Fill thy horn with oil, for I have provided Me *a king*." God wanted *a king*-man, and *a king*-man He found. He found David, a king *indeed*, not because he once reigned over a nation, but because he reigns in all ages over the best men, and over the deepest thoughts and highest moods of the best men. He reigns even more in this century than he reigned in his own. What a thought, that a man should be qualified for such a rank as this! and that *God* should attest his qualification by appointing him to it!—That one man should be so human, so much a man, and therefore so peculiarly related to God, as to be to millions of millions of men, equally God's mouth to them, and their mouth to God. It pertains not to one age alone, but to every age, that when men want to hear the very voice of the Lord God speaking in their hearts, and also when they want to pour out their whole souls unto God, they come to the words of David. When men are full of soul, whether it be from Divine sorrow or joy, they must needs find some full soul, who is full of God; and they turn instinctively to David. It is so: God and man agree in choosing David. And those who feel no deep want *to-day* of the man of God's choice, let a time of sorrow come which shall break open

and reveal to them *the depths* of their own being, and they also will agree with God that David *is a king*-man in all the deepest and most real experiences of the soul. In their shallow, light-hearted, worldly moods, they find the world enough for them; but when they enter into the solemn and silent chambers of their own spirits, and when grave thoughts, full of God and of eternity, stir in them, *then*, they go with appetite to the Psalms of David. They find in him, and in his words, that wonderful doubleness which must be in every thing that appeases the soul's profoundest longings. The Divine must lie under the human, the thoroughly human must clothe the Divine, in order to satisfy the cravings of the human spirit. The pleading, intercessory groanings of the Holy Spirit, in all regenerate souls, are expressed by this man's pen. The songs of the Divine Comforter, for all time, are given through this man. The very words which every child of God, in every condition, desires to speak into His ear, this man has spoken. David then is constituted a near kinsman to myriads of souls. He stands essentially related to their inner and innermost life. When they are, or are groaning to be, very near to God, then David is their chosen and beloved leader. Great, in the highest sense is the man, whom all men, by common con-

sent, choose to be the companion of their closet hours. Not only David's Lord, but the literal, historical son of Jesse is, of God, made "a leader and commander to the people."

III.—And may there not be very profound and tender reasons, why David should be, not only our high pattern of a Godlike life, but why also he should share with us so largely in the temptations and sins of our fallen nature? His great life of trust in God is a royal example to us; but he would not be to us, what he is, *had he been a perfect man.* Sense and nature, the flesh and the world were very strong in this man. And on this very account he is *nearer* to us. His groans and confessions fit us, his prayers and praises fit us. All our passions are in him. He is a sinner like ourselves. The Gospel is the grace of God to every creature; and are not the Psalms of David, *Psalms of God,* to every creature?

IV.—It is of God, and not of men, that we have, gathered together in the same Book, the Divine Psalms, and faithful records of *the dark and darkest features,* of this man's life. Men would have said: His Psalms are beautiful, but if every thing is told about him, *it will spoil the effect*

of his Hymns. But God is bold, and will have the man's *real life* to stand side by side with his *hours of devotion.* There, both stand in the Book, faithful but affecting pictures of the piety and of the impiety of our own hearts. The flesh was very mighty in David, the world was at times his master, and the devil he did not always resist; and yet *this man* is inspired of God to be prophet and psalmist to His Church. The history of David is pregnant with solemn warning for us all; but also full of comfort. It teaches us that the man who puts his trust in God, may, in the hour of temptation, be overmastered by his lusts and brought into fearful bondage, but that God will surely overmaster sin, world and Hell, in every soul that cleaves to Him.

V.—Is Abraham a father in faith? David is a *king* in faith. As a sheep-boy, he believes that God is with him to defend his sheep. He makes the lion and the bear feel the authority and power of his faith in God. "Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine: for thou art but a youth. And David said, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock; and I went out after him and smote him, and delivered

him out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him and slew him. Thy servant smote both the lion and the bear." If such unhesitating daring, such majesty of character shews itself in the boy, what may we not expect from the man? Boy as he is, there seems to be no vanity associated with his valour. He will not allow it to be attributed either to his muscular power or animal courage. "David said, *The Lord delivered me* out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, and *He* will deliver me out of the hand of the Philistine." There is here every element both of a great soldier and a great saint. The Philistine looked upon him and "disdained him, for *he was but a youth*, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance." Outwardly, there was a maidenliness about him; but his youth and beauty were a veil hiding the quietness of absolute prowess. "Power belongeth unto God;" but "it is the glory of God to conceal a thing." In this world of disguises, there is even an improbability about the forms in which, and the methods according to which, God works. Hear this sheep-boy once more. A right royal grandeur of faith breaks through his words. A divine contagion abides in them which is most invigorating and refreshing. The Philistine is boiling with contempt:

"Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: *but I come to thee in the Name of the Lord of hosts.* This day *the Lord will deliver thee into my hand;* and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for *the battle is the Lord's.*"

God was no respecter of persons in raising this youth to distinction. The distinction to which he was raised *was in him.* He was not holier than other men, but he laid hold upon God as other men did not. He could not dissociate any thing from God. He as much believed that God would help him to sling stones, as to govern a nation, to take a kid from the lion's mouth, as to write Psalms for temple-worship. If he was in difficulty, he knew that God was the master of the difficulty. He saw nature to be in God and from God. All beauty and joy were God's praise. His own happiness flowed forth from his soul, a poem unto God. All his miseries too he brought unto God, and they were turned into divine groans and prayers for all broken hearts. Lions, bears, Goliaths, and his own Goliathan sins, alike led him to God.

And think you, did he not play his harp *by*

God, and, in a certain sense, *in God?* Its tones must have opened Heaven, for Hell fled away before his playing. His soul was essentially musical, divinely musical. He speaks in poetry, it flows forth from an unknown depth: God indorses his poetry. All poetry is not God-inspired, but Inspiration is poetic. For Love and Truth, depth of meaning and fulness of sentiment are equally present in the Inspiration of God.

VI.—And strange to say, as indeed we have already hinted, if there were not another side to his character, *a dark, an awful side*, his Psalms would not be of the universal interest which they are. What could he have known of the deep, dark depths into which sin plunges the child of God, had he not sinned? Psalms for sinners can only be written by a sinner. They must be written as with the burning tears of a soul racked with wild misery, and as it were in the depth of Hell through sin; and yet they must be written by the Inspiration of God. Oh the depth! That the Inspiration of God should come to us *through such a soul!* It *does* come through such a soul. But the very Psalms which reveal the dreadful depravity of the writer have no tendency to kindle the depravity of the reader. The very contrary, they breathe a holy

power through the soul, which extinguishes lust and kindles the fire of God. How could we have such Psalms as xxv, xxxii, xlii, xliii, li, cxxx, &c., &c., except from God, *through a sin-slain soul?* No poor sin-destroyed soul can henceforth be without hope. For David says: "Thou hast delivered my soul *from the lowest Hell.*" Reader, art thou a *great* sinner? God puts into thy mouth the very prayer thou needest, but one which thou wouldst never have courage to speak out of thine own heart. "For Thy Name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, *for it is great.*" Is thy sin black as Hell and subtle as Hell, *take it to David's God,* He will slay thy sin and save *thee.*

The penitential Psalms are very precious to us; but what must have been the distress of the Author's soul in the day in which they were his living experience? His moisture was dried up like the drought of summer. Hell compassed him about. He was in the deep, and the tempest of God lay heavy upon him. "Out of the depths" he called upon God. "O God, I beseech Thee deliver my soul." His cries are most piteous. They are like the cries of a lost soul; but of a lost soul who really loves God.

From the day of his great sin, the king went a mourner to his grave. Not that his mourning came

into outward observation. He sorrowed after a godly sort. He had his outward sorrows from outward causes; but the depth of his sin-distress was only known to God. It was a hidden abyss of tumultuous darkness where deep called unto deep. He looked upon every sorrow and judgment as the deserved chastisement of his sin. The plague among his people, the rebellion of his son, the curses of Shimei,—all these he felt to be *God scourging him for his sin.*

VII.—That he could cast himself upon God after his sin, is a far greater act of triumph than his going out single-handed to meet the Giant-Philistine. If he was more than himself when he went forth to meet Goliath, *he was much more than himself* when under the enormity of his guilt, he sought after God; and would not let Him go without "the joy of His salvation." But there is nothing like presumption in him, no trace of one who loves his sin, and yet trusts in God's mercy. He believes in the severity of God, and welcomes that severity as merciful correction for his sin. He comes with his sin not more to the mercy, than to the Holiness of God. His prayer is for holiness. "Make me a clean heart, O God." "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." He calls upon all that is

within him not only to bless God, but to bless "His *Holy* Name."

To be taken in the snare of the Devil, and to rise up therefrom, and give himself more deeply and more sincerely, as well as more humbly to God than he ever did before, pertains to the meek heroism of self-renunciation. Satan did indeed triumph over this man, but it was the worse for Satan: it issued in his more abundant defeat. Through his sin, David came to himself, for he discovered what manner of man he was. "I was shapen in iniquity." He learnt too that only God could wash out the deep dye of his nature. But he believed that God *could* cleanse him from all sin. "Wash me, and *I shall be whiter than snow.*" Yes, for the Lamb of God, that beareth, and that taketh away, the sin of the world, was always in God. And the man who cries out so bitterly against his own sin, and for the holiness of God, proves that sin is not his life, but the horror of his life.

The Lord Jesus was as clearly *the root* of this man's life, as, according to the flesh, Jesus was *his* offspring.

"I AM THE ROOT AND THE OFFSPRING OF DAVID."

Rev. xxii. 16.

LOVE.

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I DO not say that Heat is Love, but it is a very close neighbour to Love. Heat is Love's agent. Invisible Love, working in and by invisible Heat, becomes visible in Beauty. Heat is the gate through which Love passes into the elements, into the soil, into roots and trees, into birds and beasts. (There is yet a higher gate than nature's heat, by which Love is shed abroad in the human heart. For the spirit of man being *the child* of God, is nearer to Him than any thing in nature; and therefore God and man meet by a directer method than this outer creation knows any thing about.) Under the influence of Heat, Nature puts on, as by magic, her robes of enchantment, her jewels, her crown, and dances for joy. The cattle leap, birds soar and sing, the fields are glad, and hill and dale clap their hands under the reign of Heat.

Where Heat is more generous, there nature is brightest and gayest; there her sky is fairer, her purple is richer, and her gold better burnished.

There too her flowers are more profuse and more gorgeous, her fruit is more abundant and more delicious, her insects and birds are more brilliant and the buzz and song of their life more vivacious.

II.—What Heat is to Nature, Love is to the human spirit. Love is the quickener. Under the reign of Love souls bud, and blossom and sing. Love-filled souls are always wide and beautiful. Broad and contagious are their sentiments, their words are strings of pearls, and their modes of being and manifestation various, poetic and bewitching. Nature undergoes her seasons, but is glorious in all. Love-filled souls have their changes, but they never part with their charm. Their spring is like Hope on tip-toe; their summer is Joy keeping holiday; their Autumn hides, under the sickening leaf, the mellowest fruit; their winter is not the reign of death, but the rest of life, and, like the winter of nature, full of the energy wherewith to bring forth springs and summers without end. Their cold, dark, thunder clouds are always spanned with the rainbow. Their night is like the hemisphere of faithful stars, assuring the earth that she is not solitary, although her sun is gone. Behold, so it is with Love-filled souls. They are more interesting in their misery than their tame

species are in their pleasure. They are like the nightingale which singeth through the midnight hour, as no other bird can sing at noon-day. If you can help it, don't be pious and dry, but pious and cheery; for "the trees of the Lord are full of sap."

III.—I am; that is much: I think; that is better: *I love;* that is best. Love is the top of the tree. Joy is not necessarily associated with thinking, but joy is inseparable from Love. God gives Himself so freely to Love, that Love has always Love to give away. Love awakens Love even in cold souls, as the sun awakens fragrant flowers from cold roots. Dreary hearts never forget the hours which they have spent in the company of a Love-filled soul. "Did not our hearts burn within us, while He talked with us?" Nothing is so sure of ample and endless recompence as Love. Love has a universe of friends. If Love were wounded and bleeding from head to feet, God would only make Him more glorious than He was before. If Love were dead and in the grave, God would bring Him forth again, and we should hear Him say, "Behold, I am alive for evermore."

IV.—It is said, and said with truth, that only

an Almighty hand could have made the heavens and the earth. But I say, Nothing but Love could have made them. Nature is not simply a great and wonderful organization: is she not a Palace of Beauty also? Universal Beauty is the outbirth of the universal Spirit of Love. Power belongeth unto God, for His works are great; but "God is Love," for all His works glow with everlasting radiance. Nothing but Love relates Bride and Bridegroom. Does power command them to be one? yes, but that power is Love. The relation between the sun and planets is a Love-relation; and Love is the Author of it. The sun is glad to embrace his earths, the earths are glad to be embraced by him. Million-formed life and million-formed beauty spring forth from the marriage.

A modest flower, the hawthorn in bloom, a tree stooping down to the earth under the burden of its fruit, (teaching us that great worth and great humility go together,) a bird singing in solitude:—never can I give utterance to the sweet emotions which these awaken in me. I know they are of Love. For ever and ever, Love is the Comforter. Stand still before the rose-tree, when it buddeth: ask, whence its color came, and its sweet smell? Go gather cowslips and lilies of the valley: ask them whence they got their sweet breath? Ask

the black-thorn how it is, it can bloom so sweetly under the bitter blast of the north-easter? Watch the bird building her nest, and ask, whence her skill? whence her motherliness? Look at the common hen when she exposeth her own life to save her brood; and ask for the Source of her self-sacrifice. Look into the eyes of one who loves you, and ask: Whence cometh the ocean of tenderness that lieth behind? Are not these a few among ten thousand times ten thousand ways in which God commendeth *His Love* to us? Eternal stars and transient dew-drops, singing birds and singing angels, the tones and smiles of a mother's love, the pleasures of sense and the inspirations of faith and hope, all speak the same thing in different ways and different degrees. Bethlehem, Calvary, and the voice of the sweet Dove-Spirit in our hearts are but other and higher methods of the same Love.

V.—*Sin is war against Love;* and nothing is sin but that which violates the purposes of Love. Our world therefore must be looked upon as an infelicitous manifestation of Love. War, millenniums-old war, war, stubborn as Hell, is present in every creature, in every element and in every atom. The earth is not a mirror in which we can see the fair face of Love. Broad and pain-

ful proofs, or fainter traces of enmity against God meet us every where. There is not a spot on the earth, no single plant, nor a drop of water, in which you may not find evidence of a perverse and mischievous hand. "An enemy hath done this." The devil has sown his tares throughout the world of matter and the world of souls. Yet in spite of this desperate conspiracy to defeat the purpose, and obscure the manifestation, of Love;—in spite, I say, of a myriad-headed, myriad-handed conspiracy, it is most clearly to be seen that Love has the victory. Creation has its veteran scars, but they are swallowed up in Love. It is its Beauty that strikes us rather than its scars. The assailant forces leave marks enough of their malignancy; but those dark shades, (though proof enough of the spirit and working of "the powers of darkness") only bring out into brighter and bolder relief the enchantments of Love.

VI.—Did I say, that because our world is fallen from God, and spoiled by sin, and laboring in wrath, it is unfavorable to the manifestation of the Divine Love? I recal my words; for though it is quite true in one sense, it is a yet greater and more glorious fact, that sin and misery have called forth the very Love of Love. Our world teaches

us indeed the awful reality and power of evil; but just because evil was here, and so strong here, *Jesus*, the Prince of Love, *has lived here*. The silent voice of nature's beauty has been spoken forth by the Author of her beauty. Grass and birds, lilies and corn-fields speak to us in the sermons and parables of Jesus. If beauty, melody, fragrance and fruit have come forth from Love to refresh and comfort *mortal* man; surely I can believe, that, for once, the Spirit of the whole became Incarnate for *immortal* man. If the wondrous variety of creation is a partial unfolding of the Divine Unity, what so likely as that the Divine Unity should have its own unbroken and Personal manifestation? "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world." In the earth and the heavens the Beauty of God looks me in the face, and affects me to tears and strange meltings of heart; but this aspect of the Divine Beauty is so diffuse, I cannot gather it into a single apprehension. Jesus supplies the lack. I look upon Him and I find more than the meek, silent, solemn, deep and tender beauty of the whole creation looking upon me from a human face. Does nature instruct me? Jesus instructs me much more. Does nature exert a good influence upon me? Jesus pours upon me a tenfold greater, sweeter

influence. My heart is dissolved in Love. He wins all my trust. My love, full of reverence, exclaims: "My Lord, and my God!" "Art not Thou from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die." Thou art holy, and we are full of sin, and yet "we shall not die." I can see it in Thy face, I can hear it, in Thy tones,—"we shall not die." Hear His own words: "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me *shall never die.*" I will die for you. I have come to die for you. You shall *never die;* "because I live, you shall live also."

VII.—Is the tale of the Gospel foolishness? Blunderer! what then is Wisdom? How dost thou judge of the wisdom in earth, air, fire and water? Have they not certain uses and effects. Begin thy reckoning once more, and judge of Jesus and His work, His Cross and His Death, by their uses and effects? If deeper, holier, and every way more blessed *effects* have been brought about by Jesus than nature is capable of, you ought to know that the Name of Jesus is *a greater Name* than that of nature. Or, whether you know it, or not, it *is* greater.

A machine may awaken in us admiration or even wonder. It may work smoothly and with

surprising accuracy. It may be very useful. It may do with ease more than the work of a thousand hands. It may have an awful power. But *there is no heart in it.* It has no sympathy. It hears no prayer. Such is the difference between Nature and Jesus. Nature is great and wonderful. Its uses cannot be reckoned up. It goes on and on and on, like a perfect machine, and is never tired. It keeps better time than any clock that can be made. But with all her beauty, glory and good service, there is an awfulness about nature. She has no heart. She brings forth freely and destroys just as freely. Her water will as soon drown you as wash you. Her fire will as soon burn you as warm you. She is in greater haste to bring forth weeds than plants, poisons than fruit.

There are great force and great use in the motion of paddle-wheels and mill-sails; but one is relieved to know that they have *a master.* They are subject to the will of the engineer, or the miller; he can stop them. Nature is not from everlasting. There is nothing like absolute necessity in her present modes. Her order, as we behold it, is not very old. She carries in herself the evidence that she has many times been utterly changed. She has had many ends and many new beginnings. We turn from Nature to *Him* Who was before

Nature, and we believe, that, when Nature abhors us, and sheds us like autumn leaves from her tree into her grave, He will receive us to His everlasting habitation.

"We shall not die." O Lord, had it been Thy Will that we should perish in nature's grave, Thou never wouldst have made us to know Thee, to trust Thee, to love Thee, the Everlasting One. But knowing Thee, cleaving to Thee, "we shall not die." Jesus was made sin for us and died; and yet it was *not Jesus*, but Death that died. Jesus rose again and entered Paradise for us.

VIII.—Is it difficult to believe in a purer, lovelier, happier world than this? The difficulty would be, not to believe it. The strange mixture, contradiction and conflict of the universe are inexplicable, until we recognise its harmonious centre. The Holy One must have a *true* Holyland. The beautiful and the good which are here, but have not their home here, must have their Home somewhere. Life and beauty, Love and joy *visit* us here, but their Heaven is not under the moon. Ever and evermore they are coming from *their own Heaven* into these outlands to fulfil their Divine mission and to return. The whole work of God, from the obscurest flower that blooms to the

eternal many-mansioned House of His glory, is the creation and the sport of Love. The whole is but a fascinating Love-ladder beguiling man to ascend step by step until he comes to the open vision of the "All and in all."

IX.—What is there that cannot be remedied? How can a creature's case be hopeless? What possible ground can there be for despair? "Love *never* faileth." Is not that one word enough to make the whole intelligent creation break out into singing? Love is from everlasting. "Art not Thou from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One?" There are not two everlasting powers. Evil is not from everlasting. Evil has no authority. It must be confounded. Its reign must cease. Death, the world-wide Destroyer must be destroyed. Sin is perverseness: perverseness cannot prosper. The seven-fold harmonious powers of essential being, in due time, will prevail over disharmony, corruption and death. Whatever has fallen into disorder has fallen from Love. And yet it is inconceivable that a creature should fall from *Love*. If a creature falls from Love, it is always into another love. The fall in Heaven and the fall on earth were falls from Love into self-love.

X.—Here is the Spring-head of all disorder, misery and death. Disorder could not happen till the Chain of universal Love was broken. When the creature fell from Love to self-love, the chain was broken; unity was gone; another kingdom was founded. Such was the origin of the vast empire of Selfdom, which in every principle and operation is antagonistic to the Kingdom of Love.

But the cross of Jesus reveals to us not more the exceeding sinfulness, than the cure, of sin. Sin can go no farther. Self-love has crucified Love. The Cross of Christ teaches me that self-love would annihilate God, and be its own God. Evil has done its worst. We may now look for reaction. A mighty reaction has taken place. That reaction dates from the Cross of Jesus. Self-love did its utmost to kill Love, but Love could not be killed. Love rose again from the dead. Love cannot be killed. It will therefore kill self-love. Since that awful hour of conflict when Jesus stood in His bloody bath of agony, and said, "Not My will," millions have been saying, "not my will." This word has rung the doom of the evil principle. It is both death-cry and birth-cry. The death of self-love is the new birth of Love. Through the great victory of Love in the Death of Jesus, multitudes, multitudes out of every generation are

redeemed from the tyranny of self-love to the eternal freedom of Love.

"Love is the root of creation; God's essence; world's without number
"Lie in His Bosom like children; He made them for this purpose only.
"Only to love and to be loved again, He breathed forth His Spirit
"Into the slumbering dust, and upright standing, it laid its
"Hand on its Heart, and felt it warm with a flame out of Heaven.

"Quench, O quench not that flame! It is the breath of your being.
"Love is life, but hatred is death. Not father, nor mother
"Loved you as God has loved you; for 'twas that you may be happy
"Gave He His only Son. When He bowed His Head in the Death-hour
"Solemnized Love its triumph; the sacrifice then was completed.

"Lo! then was rent on a sudden the vail of the Temple, dividing
"Earth and Heaven apart, and the dead from their sepulchres rising
"Whispered with pallid lips and low in the ears of each other
"Th' answer, but dreamed of before, to Creation's Enigma,—
Atonement!
"Depths of Love are Atonement's depths, for Love is Atonement."

AIDS TO THOUGHT.

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WHERE could the worst qualities be so safely as in company with the best? What, and whereunto, would nature's worst qualities work, if they were not committed to the care and guardianship of the best? Be not surprised therefore to find in David a far worse, as well as a far better man than Saul. What would Saul not do, had he David's worst qualities, without David's best, to restrain and chastise them? But in David, the worst make the best carry themselves very humbly; and in the end, the former fall a sacrifice to the latter, and henceforth become their meek instruments.

"By nature children of wrath." Nature is the mother of mothers. Her versatility is endless, her offspring are like her, "of every kind," and her works as well as her progeny are most contradictory and confounding.

Every now and then, awfully wild forces break forth from her, and following close upon these, the gentlest and loveliest operations. *Here*, mile after mile, we find Rocks, not stratified and regular, but lying all loose and in horrible disorder,—witnesses of terrible convulsions, which must have shaken the very globe to its centre. But instantly she is busy at work to clothe her desolations with a garment of beauty. *There*, blooms a beautiful flower, one would think it must be as innocent to the taste as it is pleasant to the eye; but no, the essence of that lovely form is a virulent poison. Take it into your system and it rapidly accomplishes the stages of its progress, from alarm to agony, and from convulsive agonies to the extinction of life. In another place you will see strange, fascinating nature displaying her delicate, green, mossy carpet, very tempting to walk upon; but if you do walk there, she will swallow you up in her morass. In another latitude, you will find a delightful climate, rich verdure, delicious fruits; but deadly serpents, loathsome vermin, horrible scorpions are there also. Nature knows nothing about an unmixed good. Not only her trees, but her works and her creatures are all "good and evil."

We are nature's children. Nature has brought us forth. Nature keeps us alive. But after treating

us to a few more bright summers she will grind us all to dust again. Are we better than mother-nature? By no means. We are nature:—children of the common mother.

"*By nature* children of *wrath.*" This motto would be very popular, if we might alter one word, and read: "By nature children of *God.*" There are many who will read it so; and will not believe that nature is a wrathful mother, bringing forth children full of wrath. But facts are facts; and when facts and Scripture agree, we have a very strong case. "All our days are passed away in Thy *wrath.*" Nature offers no escape to her children. There is no escape *in nature.* The Cross of Jesus crowns this testimony.

The Gospel declares, therefore, that we are "*shut up to the faith of Christ.*" Faith in nature is like the poor bird's faith in the snake, which, with his eyes, fascinates her, until she drops into his mouth. If we open our hearts to the regenerating power of our *Risen* Lord, the wrath of nature will become subject to His Loving Dominion; and in the end we shall be both stronger and lovelier for having been "children of wrath."

THE natural man is enmity against God, in much the same way that fish are enmity against a life in the atmosphere. It is not, *in the first place,* of man's will and purpose to be enmity against God, but first of all, *of his nature.* Man by nature is not in, but out of, the Kingdom of Heaven. The will and purpose therefore of his nature are in antipathy to the Kingdom of Heaven. Nothing short of the new birth of his spirit, can change his natural *anti*pathy into *sym*pathy.

With peculiar appropriateness, Christ calls His ministers, "*fishers* of men." For men can only become the children of God by being translated out of their element, into *His;* namely, "out of (their) *darkness,* into His *marvellous light.*"

Now it belongs as much to the art and power of the Holy Spirit to draw man out of his natural element, as it pertains to man's art and power to draw fish out of their natural element. St. Paul therefore speaks of *the exceeding greatness of the Divine Power to us-ward who believe.*

If then, when we were dead to God, through the enmity of our nature, He drew us to Himself, how much more, being drawn to Himself, will He help us to become dead unto our former selves; and being dead to our former selves, will He not straightway glorify us in Himself? Having glorified the

Head for the body's sake, will He not glorify the body for the Head's sake?

I set out for the good which God has set before me; not for the good which I can conceive. Not only with respect to sense, but with respect to the understanding also, "we walk by faith not by sight." But what account can be given of this remarkable law of our present life, that the good which *appears* to be meant for us, instead of being the good which *is* meant for us, *hides* that good?

Consider two things: First, the essential weakness and darkness of the human mind, compared with the breadth and glory of the Divine Purpose concerning us. Our expectations accord with *our idea* of God's purpose, rather than with *His purpose*. And our idea can never exceed the breadth and culture of our own minds. Our illumination, at any time, in the Holy Ghost, is the illumination of which we are capable, and never the full disclosure of the Divine Purpose. How is it possible that we should not misunderstand God? *God's* Purpose must be, like Himself, too high, too wonderful for us. *Disappointed* we must be, *deceived* we need not be. There is a progress ac-

cording to man, and there is a progress according to God. If we are wise, we shall see that our disappointment is a necessary condition of that progress which is *according to God.* To the wise man, not to be disappointed would be the greatest disappointment of all. If God were to say to him: 'My Eternal Purpose exactly corresponds with *your apprehension* of My Purpose:' that would indeed be to him a bitter disappointment. And the reply would instantly start up in his heart: '*What!* is my Father's Purpose for me really degraded to the limits of my understanding? *What!* is there no progress for me beyond what I can conceive?'

It is our glory then that we are born to be disappointed. Again and again, our minds must outgrow themselves, before we can apprehend, (much less comprehend,) that for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus. "The high calling of God," is not only the fruit of Almighty Love, but of the *Infinite Understanding.* Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, that the character and range of God's plan exceeds all the powers of our thought.

Secondly: Not only are the limits of our mind inadequate to understand what God is doing with us, and will do with us, but our whole nature is fallen out of Divine, into perverse, order. Our

thoughts being subject to *our present mode of being*, we cannot do otherwise than misconceive God's final purpose concerning us. The good which God means for us, corresponds *with His own Nature*, and not with the present perverted condition of our nature. God is bringing us out of an undivine, into a divine, mode of being, and has spoken to us of the inheritance of our future divine mode of being. But our thoughts correspond with what *we are*, and not with what we are *to be*. We must look therefore, for the dissolution of our present forms of thought, as well as of the present form of our nature.

Let us learn then rather *to trust God* our Saviour and our Leader, than our own expectations. We must trust *Him*, and whatever explodes, not be afraid. He is forming us for an end which cannot be revealed to our present capacities.

And yet this whole difficulty is no more than the difficulty of conceiving what are the nature and substance of the glorified Body of our Lord, and what the nature of that Kingdom of which He is the Sun and Sovereign. For the end of God with *us* is that we should be *like Him*, and *with Him*.

YOU can surely imagine such a thing as a world, so constituted as to be greatly obstructive to the Divine Presence and Energy; and you can also imagine a world to be so constituted as to be fully admissive of the Divine Glory. The former, is the *fallen* creation: the latter, is the Kingdom of Heaven. Why should a created sun be necessary as a medium for Divine Influence into nature, while Heaven has no other sun than God Himself, were it not that the one is open to the glory of His Presence, and the other, interceptive and suffocative?

IF your soul is, in its nature, more like God than your flesh, your soul must be in its very nature *more real* than your body. So the Eternal World, being so much more akin to the Divine Nature, than this world, must be, by so much, *more real*. *Eternal* World means *real* world. Indeed altogether apart from the testimony of Scripture, is it likely, that this first part of our endless existence should be the most real of any?

"*Drop down ye heavens from above,* and let

the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open and let them bring forth salvation." Without the heavens, the earth can do nothing. By the help of the heavens, the earth can bring forth wonders. If the heavens did not drop down from above, if the sky did not shed down its goodly influence upon the earth, what a dismal Golgotha the whole world would become! In the most literal sense, the life of man, and beast, and herb, is preserved upon earth by what comes from above. The world's salvation is brought out of the earth, *by the heavens.*

The relation then between the heavens and the earth, is a perfect type of the relation, which, (in order to our salvation,) must obtain between our souls and the holy world where God dwelleth. The holy heavens must drop down their virtues upon us, the God-filled skies must shed their beams of glory upon our spirits, or we shall perish. As the earth is bathed in skyey influences, so must our souls be bathed in Divine Influence. If the Divine bath does not save us, there is another bath that will drown us. Flood saves us from flood: the flood of God from the flood of the enemy. The enemy comes upon us like a flood to carry us away; and the Spirit of God comes upon us like a flood to save us, "by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

"The spirit of the world" ingratiates itself with all our natural affections and tastes; but in the end "drowns the soul in destruction and perdition." Unless the natural principle be overborne by a superior principle, the soul cannot be otherwise than subject to the natural principle.

O Lord, my Lord, baptize me into Thyself, that I, as Israel did, may pass through this Red Sea of carnality: otherwise, as the Egyptians did, I shall perish in the flood.

WHAT is so soft and silent as the Breath of God! and yet what is so mighty, for *God* is in His own Breath. Breathe upon me, and through me, O my God, Thy One Spirit: (One, yet double:) in my understanding it shall be the light of my eternal life, and in my affections, a quickening hallowing fire. Let it possess me, and the more it possesses me, the more it shall be my possession. It shall be to me my new Heart and my right Spirit. In the Spirit that God gives me from Himself, He shall bind me to Himself, and in the same Spirit I will bind Him to my inmost soul. And thus, of that Everlasting Covenant between us, God shall be both His own bond and mine.

"THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE."

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VISIBILITY and invisibility! are they not one? Can they be separated? Dissociated from the invisible, the visible is no longer awe-inspiring. The universe is no longer a temple, but a warehouse. On the other hand, if the invisible did not body itself forth in its own form, it never could be known. If therefore, "the Form of God," were not one with, and did not suggest *the Invisible God*, worship would be impossible; and equally, if the Invisible God were without manifestation, worship would be impossible. God, and His express Image are one God.

II.—The seat of all Power and motion is in that which is invisible. The home of Power is a hiding-place. "Power belongeth unto God." But that which is seen of God is only the face of that which cannot be seen. Behind the Manifestation lieth the Abyss. All Power is there, and thence it rises.

III.—If "all Power" is in that which is invisible, for that very reason, the invisible will make itself *appear*. Otherwise Power is no more *Power*. "The things which are seen were not made of things which do appear;" but the energies which do not appear have made unto themselves an appearance.

IV.—But *universal Power must have its own focus or organ.* Prior to the general, or creaturely manifestation of power, must be God's own manifestation in His Own Form and Organ. We may say, therefore, that "all Power" is invisible, and also that "all Power" is visible. It is both. In the words of our Lord:—"All Power is *given* unto Me,"—He declares both the visibility and the invisibility of "all Power." In that which is visible of Him, He has "all Power," but the Power is *given* from that which is invisible.

V.—"The Invisible God!" and "the Image" of the same! Are both Eternal? Certainly. What! Father, Eternal, and *Son*, Eternal? Yes, certainly. And yet there are not two Eternals. Divide them, and, as we have already said, neither is God, for neither is perfect without the other. They two are One, but you cannot say that the Eternal One is two. "I and my Father are One," not two.

Eternal Son of God is simply the Eternal Image of the Invisible Parent Power, or Godhead. The invisible powers, virtues and affections of God, (brought forth in their own Eternal Form,) constitute the Son of God, the Word Which was in the beginning *with* God, and Which *was God.* In God, Essence is Eternal and Form is Eternal. The Invisible God, by His own Organ, namely, by Him Who was "the Brightness of His Glory and the express Image of His Person," made the worlds. And Scripture giveth us as much authority to say, The Son, by, or from the Father, made all things, as to say, The Father, by His Son, made all things. For they are the Eternal One.

VI.—It may be objected, that *man* was made in the image of God, and yet we do not claim absolute divinity for him. Why then are we not permitted to impute creatureliness to the Son of God? There is an infinite distinction. Man was *made* in, or after, the image of God. But the Son of God *is* "the Image of God," in other words,—*God in Image.* Or, as He is strikingly called in another place: "The Character of His (God's) Hypostasis." Heb. i. 3. Not much less explicit are the words of our own translation: "The express Image of His Person." That is, the Form, the

full and perfect impress, of the Eternal, Essential Nature.

VII.—The Eternal Word, as God in Form, is the Form of forms, and the beginning and possibility of all forms, visible and invisible. Such He declares Himself to be: "The Beginning of the Creation of God." Rev. iii. 14. Before any movement towards a creation, or creature, "*the Word was:*"—The pregnant Image and expression of all that is God. God and His creation met in Him. He was the mirror of both. In Him, the Head, and Firstborn of every creature, the Eternal Father saw not only every thing that is created, but every possible creation. He, in Whom every thing hidden in God is expressed, must be the womb of creation,—strictly, "*the Beginning of the creation of God.*"

"*In* Him" were all things created, "that are in heaven and that are in earth." All things were created by Him *because all things were created in Him.* When as yet creation had no existence as a creation, all things were in Him. Whether they be things material or spiritual, earth, air, fire, water, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers: in their first and creative principles, all were in Him. Successive creations, therefore, are the coming forth

into manifestation of the fulness, which from Eternity, was in our Only Lord, as "the Only Begotten of the Father." *The exhibition* of the fulness which the Son of God comprehends in Himself will occupy eternity. This wondrous visible universe, Paradise into which we hope to come after death, and high above Paradise, Heaven, and the heaven of heavens, are only a partial development of the Fulness of God, the Son. His Fulness is unsearchable. "It pleased the Father that in Him *all Fulness* should dwell." But the visible and invisible creations together do not display "all the Fulness of God." God's Eternal Purpose to bring His Divine Fulness into creaturely manifestation is in no fear of being exhausted. An *Infinite* Fulness will ever and ever be coming out to view, but will never be brought out to view.

VIII.—Some of the steps in this great development are sufficiently awful, but nevertheless they are steps. Sin, whether we speak of the origin and working of it in heaven, or the propagation and working of it in the earth, is an awful mystery, as dark, as it is great. It is direct rebellion against God, and yet it is clearly *subject* to Him; and under Him, becomes a strangely, sadly interesting condition for the revelation of the mystery of the

Divine Nature. The Father knew well the Fulness that was in His Son, but no creature knew; and had there been no sin, no misery, no want in the creation, creatures would never have had a suspicion of the treasures of mercy, humility, meekness and tenderness, hidden in Him. Wild and deep are the ruins which have come by sin, but there are deeper Helps in the Son of God than the deepest ruins.

IX.—The Son of God is not a creature, but He is "*The Firstborn* of every creature." The ground, therefore, of every creature's being and individuality, abides in eternal integrity *in Him.* He is not a creation, but He is "the *Beginning* of the creation of God;" and the "Beginning" of the creation being *Divine,* and therefore neither susceptible of a fall, nor a change, the fallen creation is not without a Remedy, every way adapted and sufficient for its need. Creature and creation have fallen, but in their "Beginning," they have not fallen. *In themselves* they have lost their first estate, but *in* "*The Firstborn*" of every creature, nothing has lost its first estate. The Son of God then becomes the Saviour, because He *is* the Saviour,—the possibility of the creature's restoration is in Him alone. Every affection, principle and form

of being are in Him, not only in "their first estate," but in their Divine perfection and efficiency. The recovery of the creature is His work, because He is creation's Firstborn, or, Head of Strength. Every creature's perfection is in Him, and in Him, is in league with Almighty Power. The way to make salvation sure and certain to the creature, would be for Him to put on the creature's nature,—to take part of *the same*,—and, delivering it from the dominion of evil powers, to restore it, not simply to its first estate, but to absolute perfection, corresponding with the Divine ground in Himself.

X.—We may safely say, this "*would be* the way," for this *is* God's way. And herein we have at once the mystery of Godliness and the mystery of Atonement, revealing equally the Judgment, and the Love of God, His reconciliation *to man*, and His irreconcilability *to sin* in man. God is glorified; the inflexibility of His Holiness is demonstrated; sin has received its final death-blow in the death of Christ; (the unmingled agony of Christ, even unto death, has for ever settled the question of sin,—God *is God* and sin has no quarter,—His own Eternal Nature is sin's eternal damnation;) yet Love has triumphed and man is redeemed.

XI.—Behold then, "the Beginning of the Creation of God" is also "the Ending:" the Son of God is doubly "Head over all:"—as Original Creator, He is The Head, and as Redeemer "unto the uttermost," He is The Head. As the principles of all things are not only in Him, but in Him, in their perfection and unity, He must be universal Reconciler. If any desire to know *in what way* He will reconcile all things, and present them in beautiful and perfect unity, as "one Body" unto the Father, has He not already shewn us the perfect pattern of the whole in the Mount? Is He not Himself the "First-fruit" of the groaning creation? As is the First-fruit, such also shall the mass be.

XII.—How can we express our worship? how can we contain our wonder and joy, that we are "*joint heirs*" with such an Heir? branches of such a Stock? members of such a Body,—the Body of such a Head? Who can understand the height and depth of sympathy, subsisting between our Lord and His redeemed creatures? Can the head help being in sympathy with the body? Is not the sense of the least hurt, or pain, of the remotest member, instantly present in the head? There is no surer truth than that the Son of God is afflicted

in all the afflictions of His Body, the Church. The relation between a mother and her babe is neither so close, nor so tender, as that between Christ and His redeemed. The Lord is, in a far stricter sense, the Life of the Church, than the mother is the life of her babe. Separate from Christ, the Church is no more capable of one single heavenly affection, or thought, than the body is capable of feeling, or action, without its head. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, *yet will I not forget thee.*"

XIII.—Judge whether there is not in the Nature of the Son of God, the *Eternal Ground* of the Gospel to *every creature.* He can help, regenerate, and perfect "every creature," because the Divine Original of every creature's integrity is in Him, and in Him allied with the wisdom, goodness and might of Godhead.

XIV.—In the light of this subject also, what fulness of meaning breaks through the following surprising, blessed words: "*Every creature* which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and *all that are in them,* I héard saying, Blessing, and Honor, and Glory, and

Power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Rev. v. 13. How can any creature withhold praise from his own Divine Original? Yes, when, in Him, every creature beholds his own spotless, eternal beginning, and his own eternal end, or perfection, then the universe, clothed with His Glory, and filled with His Spirit, shall be one in His Praise. He shall be crowned with many crowns, for He is "Lord of all;" and with endless variety of worship shall He be worshipped, for the whole endless variety of Wisdom, Love and Beauty is from Him and in Him.*

* The line of thought, in the above paper, was suggested to me by something I was reading, at the time in which the notes of it were first put down, but *what*, or *whose*, I do not remember, and therefore cannot now ascertain the extent of my obligation.

GOD'S DESCENT, AND MAN'S ASCENT.

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A title more expressive of the present discourse would be: *The Descent of God into Man and Nature; and the Ascent of Man and of Nature, in God.*

How did God come down? He became man. How did man go up? He became one with God. The Lord emptied Himself of Himself that He might dwell, as man, upon the earth. Having humbled man "unto death, even the death of the Cross," He filled man with Himself and went up where He was before.

"Thou hast gone up on high:
Thou hast captivated captivity:
Thou has acquired gifts, as man:
Yea, even rebels may become the dwelling of
Jehovah God." Psa. lxviii. 19. See Heb. text.

I.—"*Thou hast gone up on high.*" "Now that

He ascended, what is it but that also He descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" Eph. iv. 9. "He bowed the heavens and came down and darkness was under His feet." "He made darkness His secret place;" for He clothed His Divine Nature with *nature*. His descent is an index of the prior descent of creature and nature; as also His ascent is an index of their future ascent. Had the creation kept its first estate, He never would have descended, but His creation having fallen, He made Himself one with it, that it might ascend again through Him.

1.—There is a way of ascending to the heavenly places which is not strictly after the model of our Lord's ascent: namely, by putting off the flesh, and thus allowing the spirit that was in the flesh to ascend. The bodies of the saints are surrendered to the dust, and they ascend to God in spirit only. This is one way, I say, according to which nature ascends; but it is not the perfect way. Indeed, this is not the *ascent*, but rather the *repudiation*, of nature. The ascent of Enoch and Elijah, and above all, that of our Lord, is the true and perfect method of ascent. There is an immense distinction between the loss of a thing and its transfiguration. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob ascended by quitting their bodies:

Elijah ascended, keeping his body. In the baptism of the Divine Fire, his body was transmuted, from an earthly, into a heavenly substance. The crucified thief went into Paradise by leaving his natural body in nature. And on the day of His crucifixion, the Lord as certainly left *His* natural Body behind Him, as did the thief. But here is the great distinction, the thief remains to this day without his body: Christ resumed His, transformed from a dark, earthy-natural, to a Divine-Natural Body. This is full, perfect Ascension. The ascent of good men, by leaving their bodies behind, is partial ascension.

2.—I suppose there is not a person in the world who would not prefer to be "changed," (as Elijah was, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,") and translated, whole, into the Heavenly world, rather than abandon the natural body, and ascend in spirit, or, if you please, in the spiritual body, only. And perhaps this universal desire for the transmutation and immortalization of the body, taken together with the instinctive dread of its destruction, may be regarded as the hand-writing of God in the soul, that the spirit in man must not only be clothed with the psychical, but also with the natural body, in order to the integrity of his nature. I assuredly rest, therefore, that under

Christ, no element of human nature will be lost. Of all those who come unto Him, it is not enough to say that He will lose *no one*, for He has said Himself: "This is the Father's will, that I should lose *nothing*." And not only so, but universal nature shall be delivered from its vanity and corruption, and inherit the glory of God and eternity. For the Son of God is not only the Head and Lord of mankind, but of nature also.

3.—Under the head of nature's ascent, I have an opportunity of speaking, I cannot say to a common, but, to a very lame conception: that, man and nature began from the bottom, or their lowest condition, and not from the top, or their divine condition. I repeat, it is a lame conception, to suppose, because it is now in its ascending order, that the origin of creation was chaos, and not rather, that the chaos was the bottom of a prior, stupendous descent. Judging from the present condition and working of nature, there is considerable plausibility in the idea that all progress is from that which is crude to that which is perfect. Such *is* the order in temporal nature, but according to what order did nature become temporal, or, in other words, how came it in such a condition, that it must be dissolved in order to return to its first estate? The assertion of a certain body of

enlightened men, that all the angels of Heaven commenced their existence at the bottom of the ladder, that is, in the dust of temporal nature, seems to me as weak as it is groundless. The notion, indeed, implies that the beginning of the creation was from itself, and not from God. For if the creation originated in God, and if it had its beginning from God, then in its first estate, *it must have been perfect.* In the beginning, (I speak not of the Mosaic beginning, or the beginning of the present order of temporal nature, but of the first, virgin creation of God,) every thing must have been, not rude and chaotic, but, heavenly and Godlike.

4.—I have no doubt that the Lord is in this respect, as in all respects, a true figure of the creation. "Now that He ascended, what is it but that also *He descended first.*" He ascended, *because* He first descended. For He brought into the earth, and into Hades, ("the lower parts of the earth,") an energy from the Highest, which wrought in Him, and by which, He ascended up where He was before. And had the origin of man and nature been low, low they must have remained. But man and nature are destined to ascend, because they first descended. There can be no rest in them, until they are elevated to their origin. Like water, creation must find its level before it can rest. By

a series of descents it became what it now is, indeed far lower than it now is; and by a series of ascents it must return to its source.

5.—Nature and creature, in their first estate, corresponded with the nature of the Only Begotten Son of God; but creation, or at least a part of it, lost this correspondence, and became a fallen thing. To meet this evil, and to make it subservient to greater good, the Son of God, by putting on temporal nature, would likewise descend, that in His Divine Power He might not only ascend Himself, but draw after Him His fallen creation. For Nature, in Him, having ascended, (that is, having been changed from its temporal, into its Eternal Form,) operates as a ceaseless attraction upon lower nature, and will operate, until nature also shall ascend and be reinstated in more than her first glory. The path of descent is from God, and because *from* God, it is progress in degeneracy. The path of ascent is *towards* God, and therefore is progress in regeneracy. The end of which progress, is glorification, or unity with God.

6.—The "greater good" which the fall subserves, is in that Almighty organic connection, henceforth, subsisting between God and His creation, through the Incarnation of His Son; and in the new spiritual tenacity, arising from the know-

ledge and experience of the bitter fruits of apostacy, with which His creatures cleave to Him. And farther, the *Divine Power*, by which every member of Christ's Body overcomes the world, himself and Hell, *will become inwrought, as an invincible creaturely development, in the whole of the redeemed universe.*

II.—The ascension of Christ then, attests *a mighty conquest.* Nature, even in her fall, is so magnificent, and her laws are so mighty and so uniform in their operation, that comparatively few persons discern her humiliation. Nature, to be truly seen, must be seen from a light superior to her own, namely, from "the glory that excelleth." When seen with her own light she is misseen. In the light of our Lord's ascended Body, we discern nature's fall;—how her gold is become dim, and her most fine gold changed. But as many are only able to regard Christ, as an ascended, and not first as a descended Being; even so, many have no apprehension of the original glory of nature. Therefore also they fail to see, even in her vanity and corruption, the proofs of her abject descent. It appears that, to the fallen, inglorious condition of man, the inglorious condition of nature is sufficiently glorious.

1.—The Lord, and the Lord only, Who carried under the cloud of nature, His own glorious Nature, had a true sense of nature's abasement. Feeling in Himself the painful, dreadful incongruity between nature and Divine Nature, He groaned within Himself. Just because He was Holy, and yet was in nature and wore nature, He was, in a sense that no other being ever was, or ever can understand, "the Man of sorrows." He was Himself the great battle-field between Nature and nature, between His Nature, and the whole house of vanity, which we know as nature. To Him, from His birth to His death, it was a house of captivity.

2.—But how could captivity hold *Him?* Was He not made flesh for this very reason, that by becoming nature's captive, He might take captive that by which He was taken captive? The Word, the Light of Eternity, suffered Himself to be shut up a prisoner in the house of nature, that He might make nature the captive of His own Eternal Light. The powers of nature are strong powers, but they are weak before the powers of the Son of God. Not only "He could not be holden," but when He went up, He carried captivity along with Him. "God has gone up with a shout. Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King,

sing praises." He has spoiled principalities and powers, He has made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them, in Himself. For in His glorified flesh, nature is glorified, and thus He has carried the strong gates of captivity up into Heavenly places. The house of captivity, the empire of the Prince of the power of the air, is spoiled, its prison doors are opened, deliverance is proclaimed to the captives, and myriads upon myriads have already escaped out of its darkness, into the marvellous Light of the Son of God. And the whole kingdom of nature, if travailing in vanity and corruption, is also travailing "*in hope.*" For it "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

3.—Henceforth, there is no captivity which can hold man, *except the captivity of his own will.* Matter cannot hold him, for matter is taken captive by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and gone up to the throne of God. Sin cannot hold him, for sin is dead in the death of Christ. He hath "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Nor can Death and Hell hold man, for Christ has destroyed their power. "*Fear not;* I am He that liveth, and was dead; and *have the keys of Hell and of Death.*"

4.—As the Son of God was once a Captive in the house of our flesh, so must we receive His Spirit

into the captivity of our nature, that He may captivate captivity, in us. All the powers of darkness strive against the entrance of the Light of our Risen Redeemer into the soul. For the entrance of the Eternal Light, is their notice to quit. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. We are no sooner possessed of "the Light of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," than we are new creatures. As new creatures, it is true, we must consent to be struggling captives all the days of our mortality; but we may rejoice in hope, for the Light and Power of our Lord's life, in us, will win the day. Jesus never becomes a captive in vain: He never fails to captivate the creature in whom He becomes captive. And to be the captive of the Lord is to inherit enlargement without limit and without end.

III.—*The Divine qualities and powers of the ascended Humanity of Christ, are "gifts for men."* What He has acquired *in* our nature, He has acquired *for* our nature.

1.—The house of flesh, in which Jesus was shut up, a suffering, weeping Captive, is become *the home of all powers.* No previous nature, or substance, can be compared with the risen, glorified Body of our Lord. The Humanity of Christ has a Name above every name, because

it has qualities above every thing that is named, whether in visible or invisible worlds. "When He had in Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, *being made so much better than the angels*"—how much better?—"so much, as He hath by inheritance *obtained* a more excellent Name than they." Heb. i. 3, 4. The same Jesus Who, by the assumption of human nature, was made "lower than the angels," has obtained for the said nature, this "more excellent Name." As God, a more excellent Name *was* His, but as man, *He obtained it.* He laid down our flesh in death, but He took it again; and in its glorification and ascension, shone forth the evidence that it was made one with the Divine Nature. "To which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand?" "But unto the Son He saith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Natures, which were supposed to be, irreconcilably incongruous, have met and kissed each other into unity, in Him. First and Last are in agreement, in Him. All natures, elements and virtues cohere in Him. "Thou crownedst Him with glory and honor, and didst set Him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet. For in that He put all in subjection under Him, *He left nothing that is not put under Him.*" Heb. ii. 7, 8.

And all those Powers and Virtues, congregated in the Nature of Jesus, and which are of universal dominion, are "*gifts for men.*" As Man, He acquired them in battle, for man. All Divine powers and qualities, all spiritual powers and qualities, and all material powers and qualities, He has gathered together in One. The house of all these powers is *Human Nature.* All possible riches are in "The Man," for men.

2.—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever you shall ask The Father, *in My Name,* He will give it you." John xvi. 23. "If you shall ask *anything* in My Name, I will do it." John xiv. 14. For His Name *includes every thing.* Ask love, ask wisdom, ask meekness, ask humility, ask penitence, ask beauty, ask for heavenly qualities, ask for Divine qualities, ask for natural qualities in their highest condition of glory and power,—ask what you will, His Name comprehends all. Highest things have taken captive the lowest, and have gone up with them to the throne of God. Jesus fills all things. He is "All." He is the First, He is the Last, and all that comes between the first and last. "Ask what you will." You are not straitened in Him. "*According to your faith* it shall be done unto you."

3.—He spake it solemnly, that it was His will

that His disciples should do greater works than He had done. John xiv. 12. The works of God which were done by Christ were done through the feebleness of His flesh. But the works which are yet to be wrought by His disciples, are the works of God through the *might* of His *glorified Son.* The descent of the Father into the flesh of His Son is not so great a work, as the ascent of the flesh to the Father. "Greater works" therefore will result from the ascent of Humanity to the Father than from the descent of the Father into Humanity. "Greater works than these shall ye do; *because I go unto My Father.*" But the Church has not yet a faith worthy of Human Nature, as made one with the Almighty Father in His Son.

IV.—All the riches of glory, of Heaven and of Godhead, which the Man of Nazareth has obtained, are truly "for man;" but it is well that it is distinctly added, "*yea for the rebellious also.*" All rebels may find quarter, for the Man Jesus, Who was "made sin for us," and "died for our sins," is in the throne of God. He is in the throne of God, and wields the power of God not to condemn, but to save them, not to judge them as rebels, but to meet them as creatures needing His pity and His strength, His truth and His grace.

His end is not to punish the rebels, but to cure them. Was it not to be expected, that He would overflow with compassion towards those, for whom He died? *He died for rebels.* He endured the penalty, and exhibited the exceeding great and dreadful evil of rebellion, in His own death; and having so done, He is annihilating rebellion by winning the rebels to Himself. He has made Himself one with them, and now seeks to make them one with Himself. He brought His Divine Nature into human nature, and was tempted in all points as rebellious nature is tempted, but He withheld it from rebelling. In Him our nature was perfectly obedient. He was "made sin," but "did no sin." Herein was the glory of His obedience, that He made *that nature* obey, which had from the beginning disobeyed. How otherwise indeed could He have been "tempted in all points like as we are," had He not been of "the same" nature that we are? Deny the identity of the Human Nature of Christ and of mankind, and the absolute rock and certainty of human salvation are no more. Whatever flesh and blood mankind were partakers of, "He also Himself likewise took part of *the same.*" He underwent the unutterable conflict between Divine Nature and our nature, and by upholding our nature in the conflict, and making it

in all things and always, to stand only, to move only, to speak only, and will only, in the Will of God, He brought it through, and out of, the conflict "more than conqueror;"—*more* than conqueror, I say, for it was *perfected* through its sufferings. In the battle it lost all its infirmities, and put on Godhead.

1.—Behold, the work of works, behold, the height and depth of God, behold, the great triumph of grace over judgment, which is not simply a triumph over judgment, but a triumph in that which is judgment's own work. What is the work of judgment? To put down rebellion, to put an end to every thing that opposeth itself to God. "I will sing of mercy *and judgment.*" Mercy has a glorious victory, not at the expense of judgment, but together with judgment. God descending into His rebel-creation, and making Himself one with His sinful creatures, is indeed the way to save them; but is it not also the way "*to finish transgression, and to make an end of sin?*" And is not this the very end of judgment. Now if grace did not perfectly accomplish *the end of judgment,* as well as its own end, it would not be the Grace of *God.* It would be partial grace, unauthorized, temporizing grace, and not grace, full-orbed, or, of the whole God. The Holy, Holy, Holy God in the

Person of His Son, takes rebellious nature into His hands, not to destroy it, but to save it—to save it by destroying rebellion in it, and making it meekly and invincibly loyal and obedient. Behold, the loyalty and devotion of unfallen angels outdone, by the loyalty and devotion of converted rebels!

2.—The rebellious would have, could have, no hope of ever dwelling with the Lord God, if He did not first dwell in them. And this is the mystery of "God manifest in the flesh," that He is come to dwell with sinners, to be *their* God, and to make *them* His people. What, but the indwelling of the Holy One, could regenerate fallen souls and make them meet to ascend into the Hill of the Lord? The question was, therefore, whether all rebel-natured creatures should be given up as utterly lost, for ever lost, or, that Jehovah God should assume their nature, and change it, and make it holy and glorious, by the action of His Divine Nature. Eternal Love *could* do the latter; but could *not* give over His fallen creation to despair and ruin.

3.—Oh, what a Divine reality of a Gospel there is for all rebels! God hath touched them. God hath made reconciliation for their iniquity, and brought everlasting righteousness *into their nature.* God, through the Man Christ Jesus,

descendeth into the rebel's heart, to fight for him against all his sins and tempters. Sin is stronger than man, but God is stronger than sin.

4.—I ask my dear fallen, fellow-creature this only: Will you, that your spirit should be a dwelling-place for Jehovah-Jesus, your Lord and Saviour? It *is* His will to come into you, that He may make a new creature of you. If it be your will, the covenant is complete, and no power can break it. Christ in you, will be your spirit of true Repentance, true Faith, true Hope, true Love, your spirit of Obedience, your Peace, and your whole Salvation.

AIDS TO THOUGHT.

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"He is our Peace, Who hath made both One." What! can a Jew be delivered from his national prejudices? It is only possible in Christ. He took Jewish flesh, and died the shameful Gentile death; but it was neither Jewish nor Gentile flesh that rose again, but altogether a new thing. Christ has slain the Jew in Himself, and brought in the Divine Man,—"One New Man, *thus making Peace.*" The wall between races is broken down. The ground of enmity is gone. As the Lord hath abolished *in Himself* all enmity, between this sort of flesh, and the other sort of flesh, and along with it, all strife about Jewish, or anti-Jewish laws, ordinances and formalities;—even so He abolishes, in *His disciples,* all ground of enmity and strife, by taking them out of the limits and conceits of their family, their nation, and even of their world, and by creating in them "the *new* man."

In yet a higher sense, "He is our Peace." He has cured in Himself the ancient enmity,

old as the old serpent. The strife between God and flesh is healed. He found the enmity deep and malignant, and the strife awful unto blood-sweating, but He exhausted the enmity and quieted the strife for ever. "He hath made both One." The flesh is no more without God, God is no more without flesh. Where there was, for ages of ages, hopeless antagonism, there is Peace. The Atonement is perfect. God and flesh are One. Christ is the Peace of the universe. The storm has been long, but the great calm cometh. Extremes are uniting. Heaven and earth are stretching forth their arms to each other. The day is nearing, in which they will terminate their long estrangement, in a Divine embrace.

THAT a sin-stained, sin-full creature should be exhorted to come to the Holy, Holy, Holy God, and to come that *he* may *live*, is clearly an act of pure grace; but does it not involve *a very mystery* of grace? It implies an absolute pardon. But where is the ground of pardon? The ground of pardon *cannot be in the sinful creature.* Where is it? There must be a ground of pardon altogether distinct from the creature who needs pardon. If there

were not, it would be impossible that the Holy Lord Almighty, should invite the sinful to come *to Him.* From the entrance of sin into the world, were not innocent lambs and oxen slaughtered *for man?*—a most forcible and humbling method of teaching him that the ground of pardon was *not in himself!* And their flesh burning on the altar of God and ascending to Him, as "a sweet-smelling savour," was a most affecting way of teaching the sinful creature that *his life* had ceased to be a sweet savour, and that, consequently, there was no ground in himself of his acceptance with God. Where then was it? Was it not in God Himself? Have not lambs and oxen in them somewhat of God's own innocence and goodness? Sacrifices were *for man,* but they had relation to *that in God which is the eternal ground,* whereby He can justify the ungodly.—God had from eternity, in His Bosom, His own Son, Who was in spirit and in purpose, "from the foundation of the world," a Sacrifice unto God for His creature's sin. The revelation of this fact is as old as the revelation of pardon. The first woman, the first time she became a mother, exclaimed: "I have gotten" (the promised seed) "the man-Jehovah." (See Heb. text.) The dear mother of us all was bitterly disappointed; but it clearly shews that the expectation of the

Jehovah-Saviour was coeval with Adam's sin. "God will provide Himself a Lamb for a burnt-offering." "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him" (on *His own Lamb*) "the iniquity of us all." However it be explained, *the Lord has had to suffer for His creature's sin.* The sin and sorrow of mankind have been "made to meet in Him."

The ground of pardon then, is neither in man, nor in the Eternal Love of God, *apart from sacrifice,* but in the Love of God *in Christ,* the Jehovah-Man. The Spirit of Love is the Spirit of Sacrifice. Love is sacrifice, for Love gives itself to another. "Christ hath *loved* us, and (therefore) hath *given Himself for us,* an Offering and a Sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour."

But though our death unto sin and our new life unto God are not *the grounds* of pardon and acceptance, they are inevitable *effects,* flowing from union and communion with our Crucified and Risen Lord. We are saved indeed! for "*we are sanctified,* through the Offering of the Body of Jesus." If the new Human Stock is Holy, then all the branches which are set into Him must become holy through His Holiness.

IF a man has not the whole of himself with himself, he ought to inquire into it; for it is hard to be a man and not to have the enjoyment of a man. There is always a peculiar charm about the man who lives wholly and heartily while he lives. The man himself has the first enjoyment of this charm. Heaven and earth make one in a man's life, when he has the consent of his whole nature for what he is, and for what he does.

WHAT a melancholy contraction is a selfish human heart! What a noble, divine organ, is an enlarged human heart! What genial influences radiate far and near from one such heart! A God-filled heart is a sun to many hearts:—might I not say, to many ages? The influence of such a heart as David's, Paul's, John's, can never cease to warm, quicken, and comfort other hearts.

THE least actions and the softest words of those who do little things, with depth and fulness of spirit, are unspeakably greater than the greatest works, done in the shallow world-spirit. That alone

is great *in which God is.* May God so reveal to us the grandeur of the human life,—yea the grandeur of it when it is ever so retired, quiet and humble,—that we may do our least actions *as we sow small seeds,* knowing that a self-multiplying power is in them. Dorcas is no more, but the influence of her example is gone into all the earth. Instead of working with one pair of hands in her solitary room, she is now sitting in a thousand places, making garments for the poor with many thousands of hands. The fame of a pot of ointment, which an obscure individual once devoted to the Lord's feet, is gone into all the world. And we are assured that, if we only give a cup of cold water, *with an intensity of spirit,* that is, with Christ in the Spirit, the act will spring up in Eternity, and return to us again with wondrous increase.

THE VIRGIN MARY.

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It may be that Protestants, disgusted with the vain flattery, not to say idolatry, of Rome, do not assign to the Virgin the rank that is due to her. The angel Gabriel salutes her as one "full of grace," as *the woman* among women, saying, "Blessed art *thou* among women." And Elisabeth, "*filled with the Holy Ghost,* cried out with a loud voice, and said, *Blessed art thou among women.* And whence is this to me, that *the mother of my Lord* should come to me?" This was no small honor to be paid to her, by one who was herself "righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless." And observe, that the angel Gabriel in Heaven, and Elisabeth on earth, pay the same testimony to her, which is strictly the testimony of God; for they spake not from their own will and thought, but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Indeed, apart from the testimony of Holy Scripture, which is very emphatic, the medium through which the *Lord* came into the world, *must* have been a pre-

pared vessel. For if it was necessary that one should be raised up, "filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb," to turn "many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God," to "go before Him in the power and spirit of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared of the Lord," lest at His coming He should "smite the earth with a curse;"—how much more would Mary have perished before the Divine Holiness, had she not been "prepared of the Lord?" As it is written: "The earth feared and was still, when God rose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth." We must by no means suppose that the principles and affections of fallen nature from Adam, Judah, David, &c., &c., &c., were not in her: they were in her, but she being full of holy fear, they were not permitted to ascend into her will or life. Every thing in her was still. There was nothing in her to awaken judgment. In her meekness she was saved.

II.—But for the very reason that *grace was given her* to be as nothing before the Lord, we must ascribe it to the Lord, and not exalt her out of her place.

According to St. Paul, Christ, being glorified, is not henceforth to be regarded as the Son of Mary. He was only the Son of Mary, "after the flesh," but He is no longer to be known "after the flesh." Mary was the mother of Jesus, but *not* of *our Risen Lord* and Saviour, Jesus Christ. She was the mother of His humilation, not of His glorification. The body which He derived from Mary was "crucified through weakness;" but His Resurrection-form is neither of David nor Mary, but "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness." He emptied Himself to be born of a woman; but in that He is the Temple of the Godhead, it is impious to speak of any creature as His mother. Even in the days of His flesh, when one said unto Him, "Behold Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with Thee, He answered and said unto him, Who is My mother? and who are My brethren? And He stretched forth His hand towards His disciples, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren!"

From the Cross also, the Lord teaches all generations that Mary and St. John, (or the Church represented by St. John,) rather than Himself and Mary, are to be regarded as mother and son.

And did He not reprove one who said:

"Blessed is the womb that bare Thee and the paps which Thou hast sucked?" saying, "Yea rather blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it." Luke xi. 27, 28. As one of the fathers said: "It was not the Christ which the Virgin Mary carried in her womb that saved her, but the Christ that she carried in her heart."

III.—When Truth is severe, I must be willing to be severe, for the Truth's sake. But if, even in the service of Truth, I am called to speak a severe word to the Mother of all the Churches, I desire to do it with the humility that becometh the least and unworthiest of her children, or her grand-children. So far as she is the mouth of God, I meekly sit at her feet and learn of her. So far as her doctrines are in sympathy with Holy Scripture, I bow to them. And so far as the Forms of her Church-service are but the continuance of the Old Testament method of expressing our Gospel mysteries, God forbid that I should have any prejudice against them:—nay, rather, I revere them. For all that ever did represent Heavenly things, represents them still. "The patterns of things in the heavens," are as much *patterns*, after "the heavenly things themselves" have come, as they were before. And as to the

saints of the right venerable Mother-Church, (I speak of those who were saints indeed,) in what Church will you find the like? Her holy literature also is inimitable, for sobriety of speech, and no less, for its closeness to the letter and spirit of New Testament teaching. Both her saints and her literature exhibit that rare self-conquest, the signs of which are deadness to the present world, and a genial acceptance of the daily life of the Lord's Cross. And consequently they are endowed with an inherent savour, or Divine Unction, through which they can never cease to be precious to every renewed heart. How can I speak more praise?—Unless by adding this one word, that the praise is *due.*

But is it not written, to his honor and for our example, of good king Asa, concerning his zeal for the integrity of the Lord's worship and service, that *he spared not his own mother?—"Even her he removed from being Queen, because she had made an idol in a grove."*

The like zeal now moves me to write what I write concerning the idol which the Romish Church has set up, and concerning that new doctrine which she has made and decreed. Which new doctrine, namely, "*The Immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary,*" is the foundation on which

she has permanently set up her idol. I write the *Romish* Church, in this case, and not the Catholic Church, because she has done this thing out of her *Romishness*, and not out of her adherence to her Risen Lord, the Head of the Church. Nor would it be true to say that the *Catholic* Church has decreed this dogma. The Catholic Church of the Lord Jesus Christ rejects it, not as wanting in plausibility, but as wanting in *truth*. The Christianity of *Rome* may own it, but the Christianity of the New Testament, *never*. The seal of Rome is on it, but not the Seal of the Holy Spirit. Nor could *Romanism* give a more striking, emphatic proof of spiritual owlishness, than she has done in this, her "latter-day" doctrine. By this we know that "the screech-owl and the satyr, the Ziim and Ijim" have come to dwell "in her palaces," and that the Lord is stretching out upon her "the line of *confusion*." Infallibility is infallibly in its dotage.

This last, pet doctrine of her's, which instead of being "light in the Lord," is only light with Pagan wisdom, convinces me that Romanism has ends of its own, altogether distinct from the Lord's ends, and that seeing its own ends cannot be accomplished by any means which the Holy Spirit authorizes, it seeks to accomplish them by the un-

authorized authority of its own means. The Church which sets up adulterous doctrines may take to herself the name of Romanism, for that is Pagan enough, but we must deny to her the name, of "the Catholic Church."

IV.—This doltish dogma of "the Immaculate Conception," is not only itself grossly unscriptural, but it betrays an ignorance of *the plan of Salvation.* Whoever tells me that Mary was not ordinarily, but immaculately conceived, tells me thereby, that he is ignorant of the Incarnation, ignorant that Jesus was "the seed of David according to the flesh," and therefore ignorant also of the very *ground* and *reality* of the Lord's temptations. Moreover, he is ignorant of the Divine purpose, in causing the actual names of notoriously unchaste persons to be recorded in the genealogy of the Lord's flesh, namely, in "the Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ." To say nothing of the names, Rahab and Bathsheba, which occur in the line, "it is evident that our Lord" (and, therefore of course, Mary) "sprang out of *Judah.*" And it is also evident that the whole tribe of Judah had its origin in an illegitimate bed. Judah had five sons in all, three of them, Er, Onan, and Shelah, were the fruit of his unlawful connection with

a Canaanitish woman; and the other two were the offspring of his incest with his daughter-in-law. Gen. xxxviii. 1—5, xlvi. 12. Matt. iii. 3. How broad the distinction between the purpose which the Holy Ghost has, in making known to us that the Lord not only took our flesh, but our shame along with it; and the purpose which Rome has in declaring that Mary was *immaculate*, not by regeneration, but by generation. According to such a doctrine, the sacrifice of Mary, instead of being an offering in simplicity and truth, was an act of hypocrisy. For according to Rome, Mary had no uncleanness. But to the confusion of Rome it is written: "When the days of *her purification*, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they brought Him (the Babe, Jesus) to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord; and to offer a sacrifice, according to that which is written in the Law of the Lord." The difference then between Rome and the New Testament is no less than this: the New Testament says, the Lord "took part of *the same*" flesh and blood, with the children of Adam, the Church of Rome, by her new doctrine, says, not only that He did not, but that *Mary* did not. The New Testament joins the Lord to human nature, but Rome interposes a very wide breach, by cutting off the line between Mary and the race.

According to the New Testament, *human nature*, and not an angelic, nor a super-human nature, is saved in Christ. According to Rome, human nature is not actually saved at all, for the Lord was not made a partaker of "*the same*" flesh and blood. The New Testament reveals to us a Saviour "Who was made sin for us;" but Rome foists upon us an an "Immaculate Virgin," not a right human, but a goddess mother.

But if Rome desires to be regarded as the sole proprietor and worker of the mechanics of Salvation, it cannot be wondered at, that she should be anxious to effect a breach between the True Saviour and mankind. Her end is to have the exclusive occupation of the said breach, and to transact all negotiations to and fro.

The Lord has no sympathy with this doctrine of Rome; the Holy Scriptures are clear from it; Heaven repudiates it, and no one in Heaven abhors it more than the Virgin herself. For she is a daughter of Adam's fallen race, and, among the meekest and the humblest of saved sinners, ascribes all her salvation to God and the Lamb.

Whatever self-sufficient Queen-angel, or spirit, Romanism may have in the world of spirits, it is not the Virgin Mary. Like the angel who appeared to St. John, she would certainly say to every one

who had a thought of worshipping her: "*See thou do it not.*" The Prince of the Power of the air, without doubt, is able to meet this Pagan longing of Rome, and to provide her with a patron, who has no objection to receive worship.

But if an angel from Heaven sought to bring a goddess into the Church, or to make out a case for the worship of Mary, no other proof would be needed of his being *a fallen angel*, and as such the simple in Christ Jesus would resist him.

THE UP-BUILDING OF MERCY FOR EVER.

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If it be true that there is more mercy in God, than has ever come forth into manifestation, we cannot wonder that well-taught souls should never let go their hold on God. If, by the Holy Spirit, Which "searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God," they have such an insight into the Divine Nature, as to know that, "*Mercy shall be built up for ever*," they carry in their souls a secret warrant for the steadfastness of their faith. Every thing which they can see, or, of which their reason can judge, may be discouraging; but they will not be discouraged. They may be disowned and cast off by God, and yet they will abate nothing of their confidence, that He is *their* God. They persist in the cry: "My God? my God!" Abraham believes that he has the profoundest reason for what was, apparently, contrary to reason; and he believes in hope when there is no hope. Though there is no hope, there is God; therefore, *there is hope.* Another Patriarch believes in the hidden, bound-

less goodwill of God towards him, and he will not be shaken off until he has prevailed. Another, in death, will not believe in death.—"Though He slay me," he exclaims, "yet will I trust in Him." And he is justified; for, "*Mercy shall be built up for ever.*" David's conviction, that, though overwhelmed by a superior force, no essential harm could come to him, was just and right. "Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall *not fear:* though war should rise against me, in this will I be *confident.*" "For I have said, *Mercy shall be built up for ever.*" And the bold, humble men of all generations have the utmost authority for their brave song: "Though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, *we will not fear.*" Waters may roar and be troubled, for they are but waters, and mountains may shake, for they are but piles of dust; but "*God* is in the midst of us, *we* shall not be moved." "God shall help us;" and "*Mercy shall be built up for ever.*" The faith, which, when all things seem to be working together for evil, believes notwithstanding, that all things are working together for good, God has honored with the multiplied confidences, namely,

that string of golden pledges, the ninety-first Psalm. And Mary Magdalene, with her seven-fold possession of evil, is not without hope, that the power of sin in her, will fail before the greater power of God's mercy; for she has heard, that, "*Mercy shall be built up for ever.*" And the woman of Canaan will acknowledge that, compared with the true children of God, she is a dog, and that she hath no part in His covenant; and yet against hope, she hath faith in His Help. Her faith is very daring; but the Lord justifies it, and grants her all that she desires. "*Mercy shall be built up for ever.*" The strange prayer: "In wrath remember mercy," is not presumption, for mighty as evil may be, Mercy is *All*-mighty. In *appearance* judgment is not mercy; yet faith is confident that the centre of judgment *is mercy.* And though many prophet and righteous men have sunk down overawed, before the majesty and glory of God; yet Moses will go up into the awful Presence. For he relies that in the midst of the consuming fire of the Divine Holiness, there is a secret Bosom of meek Mercy.

II.—And behold, "the fulness of time" proved it to be so, for One "came out from God," out from the central and burning energies of the Almighty;

and those who heard the angels chanting His nativity went to see this Wonderful One, and lo, they found "*a babe, lying in a manger.*" He grew up in meekness and lowliness of heart, and became the uncomplaining Lamb of Calvary. Well, said Isaiah: "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?" For under the guise of such gentleness and humility, few could recognise *Jehovah's Arm.* Truly, He Who made the world was in the world, but the world knew Him not.

III.—Mercy is the meekest attribute of God, and therefore not in haste to shew itself. For millenniums upon millenniums, Wisdom and Power, Love and Holiness had been manifesting their glory; but Mercy was very humble and tarried behind. But Humility shall be crowned with double honor.—"For I have said, *Mercy shall be built up for ever.*"

IV.—O my God, hast Thou, indeed, said it, that, "Mercy shall be built up *for ever?*" Is Mercy only now at the foundation of her work? Is she up-building still? and will she go on to be built up more and more? And is it really true, that, Mercy is not yet so great, nor so strong as she

will be? Even so. Mercy is but at the beginning of her way.

O my God, how is this? Art Thou a growing God? A growing God would not be God. "From Everlasting to Everlasting Thou art God," and "the Same, to-day, yesterday and for ever." But that which is hidden in Godhead groweth more and more out of its Place into manifestation; and "Mercy *shall* be built up *for ever.*"

It is not permitted then to regard God as more merciful now than when the camp of Israel trembled before Him, calling Him, "the Great and Dreadful God." He has found no bowels and mercies in these days, which He had not then. God is neither more nor less than He ever was; but, for His creature's sake, what was hidden, has been outborn. There has been an outcoming and an up-building of His Eternal Mercy. The Kindness and Love which were in God have *appeared.* The Son of His Love, Which was in the Bosom of the Father, has "*come out from God.*"

V.—In the Word made flesh and dwelling among us, we have the Divine Outcome of Mercy; and in the glorification of His Flesh, Mercy is up-built into an Eternal Form and Organ for manifestation and communication for ever. Eternal

Mercy has been built into a Man: that Man is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. Mercy, through Him, as through Its own Divine Organ, has an efficacy for fallen and sinful creatures, which It never had before. Through His sorrows and tears, His humiliations and agonies, the Eternal Mercies grew in Him and were built up into a Divine Man, into "a Merciful and Faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

"Lo, I come: I delight to do Thy Will, O My God." Yea, and He shall do it. "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands." The poor and the needy, the sinful and the unhappy, shall be blessed in Him. When certain persons brought unto Him one, that they might punish her, according to the law of Moses, first of all, He convicted *them* of sin; and then, turning to the woman in Holy Mercy, He said unto her, "Go and sin no more." He inspires the soul with strength for the future by the forgiveness of the past. He corrects sin, without upbraiding the sinner. "He gathereth together the outcasts." He bringeth forth the captives from their prison. "He healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds." He helpeth "him that hath no helper." None that come unto Him are sent empty away. He

will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. "Men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him, Blessed."

VI.—Eternal Mercy is built up in Jesus, *that it may be built up more and more in human hearts and human works.* He is the Head and Pattern of a merciful race. He is the Spring of all merciful thoughts, and therefore, the Founder of all merciful institutions. He is secretly stealing the heart of stone from mankind and creating the heart of flesh. God is faithful to His Name, He is, verily, "God *with us;*" He is working in us and by us, more than we suspect; His work groweth from age to age, and never standeth still. His work is mercy, and He hath said: "*Mercy shall be built up for ever.*" Holy Mercy, as it is in His Son, must be developed and built up in a new human world. "He shall see His seed;" and His seed shall be like Him. If you compare the Roman world, as it was when Divine Mercy appeared in "Jesus of Nazareth," with the *world,* to say nothing of the Church, as it is to-day, you will find that the growth of mercy is truly wonderful. Mercy has overrun the world. Her footprints and her handiwork are every where. She has never ceased to go forth in quest of misery

and want. With chaste heart and white hands, wherever sorrow is, thither she hastens to be a ministering angel in the Name of Jesus.

Suppose you could remove from human hearts and from the face of the world, the works which Mercy has done during the last fifty years, would not the world sustain a loss too dreadful to meditate? Mercy never had such an army upon the earth as now. Mercy is fulfilling works of patient, self-denying service, such as the sun never witnessed before. Yes, Mercy has been blessedly built up in our time. And she will yet go deeper with her work, and make it also longer and broader and higher; for in our children's days, and in the days of our children's children, the work of Mercy shall continue to be built up, and prosper.

VII.—The Body of the Lord Jesus, which is His Church, is *the ever-growing organization of Mercy.* And what the power and dominion of Mercy will ultimately be, and what will be her ways and works, no one can imagine. Indeed no human eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived, either the dimensions or the beauty of that Temple for God, which Mercy has already built up, in the souls of our fallen race. Only the outworks of Mercy are exposed to our view: the chief

works of Mercy are interior, and only known to God and His holy angels. But even angels know not whereunto the mystery of Divine Mercy will grow. They know the great facts which have already transpired, namely, the birth of the Lord from Heaven in our nature, His sufferings, His death, His ascension, the pouring out of the Holy Spirit into the earth, the operations of the Church, and the multitudes of the redeemed; but still, with intense desire, they look into these things, for they cannot see *unto the end* of that which Mercy is doing, and of which the sacrifice of Jesus is the beginning and the spring. How should any creature in earth, or Heaven, see the end of Mercy's work, seeing that, "Mercy shall be built up for ever?" Who shall assign limits to the influences and motions which shall yet come upon human hearts from Calvary? Is not the love of Christ destined to possess and constrain the Church much more than it has ever done? How can a lukewarm Church foresee what the Lord will do, when He and His Church are strictly in sympathy? From stricter sympathy there will be closer conjunction, and from closer conjunction between Almighty Mercy and the organ of Mercy in the world, will come——*what?*

VIII.—One word to you, ye *beloved children of sorrow,* for you are *beloved:* know you not that it is given to you to suffer that you may be brought into deeper, sweeter fellowship with "the Man of Sorrows?" In love, the Lord forsaketh you that you may know the dryness and the bitterness of your own spirit, and thence, long after Him with keener appetite. Out of self-knowledge springs self-aversion, and this is the Lord's way of providing greater room in you, for Himself, and thus, of bringing satisfaction to your intensest affections. He will keep His promise with you: "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; *but with great mercies* will I gather thee." When therefore His presence seems to be wholly withdrawn from you, with a quiet, assured trust, *expect His return.* For according to His word, upon which He hath caused you to hope, He will return. "In a little wrath" (little, for it was wholly for your good, and not for His pleasure) "I hid My face from thee for a moment; *but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee,* saith the Lord thy Redeemer." "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; *but My Kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of My Peace be removed,* saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." "O thou afflicted,

tossed with tempest, and not comforted," "rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him." "For thus saith the Lord, As one whom his mother comforteth, *so will I comfort you.*" Through sorrow, God is hallowing you unto Himself. Through sorrow, God is preparing your spirit to be a vessel for the service of His tender charities and compassions. You are chosen to be the vessels and organs of His Mercy. He is chastening you and making you meet to be added to the growing Heaven of His merciful ones. Mercy groweth exceedingly. Mercy will become very powerful. Mercy cannot be too strong. "God delighteth in Mercy." "*Mercy shall be built up for ever.*"

"GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN."

EVER LEARNING, NEVER KNOWING.

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The Proposition. Truth is that which *is.* But all that the man of nature can see, or find, is that which *seems:* the ground, therefore, of all his reasoning is that which *seems.* Only God can affirm what *is.* Apart from Revelation, therefore, strictly speaking, man *knows* nothing. He has *Opinions: Truth* he has not. And Revelation being given, it can only be understood *on the conditions which Revelation itself affirms,* and not on the conditions that accord with man's own will or judgment.

Never in any previous age of the world were there so many men devoted to literature as now. Their name is Legion. But though always learning, many of them get no nearer to the first plane of Truth's own kingdom. Not a few, through

their very knowledge, are actually getting farther and farther off from Truth. It seems, not rather hard, but very hard, to be ever learning, and never coming at the end of learning;—which is, "the knowledge of the Truth." But how should it be otherwise with those who proudly defend fallacy against Truth, and resist Truth as fallacy? To them "the True Light" is darkness, while they retain boundless assurance in their darkness, because it is the darkness of light. When the light is darkness, how great is the darkness! The soul, prepossessed with its own "light of nature," comes not to the Light of God.

II.—The knowledge even of facts, may be but a blind, doggedly keeping out the Truth. The veil which hung before the holy of holies was very curious,—covered with varied and sublime hieroglyphics: those who saw it, saw hints of things wonderful, but the veil hid much more than it revealed. In like manner, varied and immense knowledge is often a splendid veil. Those who in ancient times saw the Cherubic veil, knew that its express purpose was to hide from them the too bright Presence,—the Presence of Truth; but in this iron age, which in some respects, is the most wonderful of all the ages, many admire, with great

admiration, and study with intense interest and application, the universal veil, without knowing that it is a veil. They are "*ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth.*" And worse,—"As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these *resist the Truth.*" They resist the Truth by truth,—the Truth of the inner and superior kingdom by the quasi truth of the outer and inferior kingdom. Their light constitutes an inveterate repugnance to the True Light. Nothing is so blinding as light. One sun blinds our eyes to all the constellations of the firmament. Had the sun never set, it would have been to us the sole glory of the heavens; but now we know that it is but as a single speck of light, which, were it extinguished, would scarcely be missed beyond the solar system. Thanks to sunset, for the withdrawment of the specious blind. But the light of man's natural intellect, of which nature is the great object, will not so quietly and easily give place to those far more glorious revelations, which can only be given to the spiritual understanding. It is with light, or knowledge, that the god of this world blinds the souls of men to true knowledge.

III.—"Facts are stubborn things," and they make stubborn souls. Nothing is more common

than for men, on the strength of facts, to fight against the Truth. Dear outer men, and their outer facts! how proud and confident they are, how stiff and sturdy their opposition! What hope is there for their blindness, when they are so sure that they see? They do see indeed. What do they see? *A few facts.* But what are the facts that they know, compared with those which they do not know? The facts pertaining to the physical universe, do not comprehend *all* facts. There are facts innumerable, which do not come under any physical law. I will not say that it is pitiable that men should spend their half century in studying the objects, in reading the laws, and in gathering the facts of this outer creation; but it is pitiable that they should dream that there is no other sphere of objects and laws,—no higher order of facts. They are absorbed, to stupefaction, in *their* subject. The apology to be made for them is, that their subject is very great. But it is unhappy that it should blind them to one so much greater. They calmly settle down in their partial knowledge, as though it were all knowledge. They assume that this visible, outer creation, is the kingdom of God, and luminous with absolute Truth. They are as men in some wonderful cave, who take their cave for God's high creation, their

candle for the sun, and *their* conclusions for God's Truth. The whole web and tissue of their knowledge is but the specious means of excluding the Light of Eternal Truth from their eyes. They have sense, but not faith, opinions, but not "the Truth." The wisdom which the soul getteth by the harlot, Sense, is bastard-wisdom, not wisdom.

IV.—I was lately reading a volume of sermons by one of the ablest of all the Egyptians.* He is a fine specimen of a mighty nature-spirit, whose forces are not *divided,* (like those of twice-born men,) between nature and the kingdom of heaven, but, Egyptian-like, all united in one direction, and devoted to the wonders of nature. He cannot endure his world-wisdom to be called "foolish," nor his natural reason to be called carnal. Mizraim is really a narrow thing, a straitness, yet will it maintain, with much pertinacity, that it embodies all mysteries. But if you allow its own priests to lead you through the introductory halls, and temples of gods and mysteries, to the very inmost, there you find—*an animal.* It may be a very wonder of an animal; but it is an animal and nothing more. Likewise, I find nothing in these sermons, beyond

* Theodore Parker.

the animal mind, that is, the mind, as under bondage to the senses and sensible things; but you commit a great offence if you will not acknowledge this outer wisdom, for absolute Wisdom. He even rebukes the New Testament for making light of his world-wisdom. These are his words: "It seems to me, that the value of the intellect is a little underrated by some writers of the New Testament; and wisdom sometimes turned off rather rudely. As if the knowledge of God's world, and of its laws, could disturb the natural service of God." Here the whole question is begged. For though "*the natural* service of God," is that with which Nimrod and a whole army of mighty ones, seek to fascinate us; it is precisely that from which Revelation seeks to deliver us. "The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and his offering He had not respect." This makes Cain very angry; and, if God will not have respect unto his beautiful, natural religion, then he will turn his back upon God, and make the world his god. God calls His child out of Egypt, but Egypt is far too wonderful to be abandoned for the desert, by any Egyptian. In the spirit and purpose of his teaching, dear Theodore is *at least* 2000 years behind his age. He is a Pagan philosopher laboring in the nineteenth cen-

tury, not to bring us out of the light of nature into the marvellous light of God, but to convince us that nature's light is by no means to be regarded as "darkness." He knows no other temple than the world-temple, and he thinks from the top of that, to reach Heaven. Poor Nimrod!—he cannot imagine any other road to Heaven than a natural one.

V.—You will find scholarship, prodigious reading, and colossal handiwork, but you will seek in vain, for *the philosophy of the Cross of Christ*, in this school. It has no aptitude for "the hidden wisdom:" its wisdom is that of the brutish world, brutish. "Thy thoughts, O God, are very deep," and not known in this school. The world knows much; but, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee." That the Son of God should be glorified through crucifixion, and that *thus* the Father should be "glorified in the Son," is a theology contemptible in Theodore's eyes. He has no conception, that profound and universal philosophy underlies the doctrine of "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." It has not entered into his heart to conceive that it is God's own solution of the confounding problem of temporal nature. The Lord's method of witnessing to the Truth, is altogether foreign to him. The

only really quickening religious literature which we have, is, to him, folly and superstition. To quote his own words again, "he turns away from this superstition to look on sunny nature, on the minnow in the sea, on the robin in the field, on the frog, the snake, the spider and the toad, and smiles at the sight of their gladness in the world, and wishes to share it with them." Is it not worthy of Egypt? He can see God in nature; but not above nature. Least of all can he see Him, (in the death, burial and resurrection of His Son,) finding fault with temporal nature, and bringing in the first-fruits of eternal nature. "If the first had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second." But he cannot sympathize with the Divine Holiness, which dooms the first heaven and the first earth to pass away, in order that there may be "a new heaven and a new earth." He will not have it, that there is any antithesis between world-facts and eternal principles, that is, between temporal facts and eternal facts. He will believe at any rate that man and nature are already according to God. To him, therefore, of course, it will be folly and superstition to regard "Jesus Christ and *Him crucified*," as the great Central Truth of the material universe. His central truth is, rather, Osiris, or, the animating

principle of nature; and his circumference, Isis, or nature.

VI.—"The wisdom of the world," viewed in its own sphere, as wisdom *of the world*, is very great. But the wisdom of the world, compared with the Wisdom of God, is not wisdom at all. The wisdom of the world assumes that the New Testament revelation is a fable,—assumes as Peter did before his regeneration, that man according to the flesh is according to God, and therefore need not be crucified. Peter had not the least conception, that his zeal for the natural form of human life, was an offence to Truth. This false beginning vitiates all the thoughts and conclusions of the carnal mind, not only about God and man, but about every thing.

The doctrine of Christ sets out from a very different beginning. It teaches us to regard nature and man, not as whole, but as crucified with Christ, in order to be made whole. The doctrine of Christ, therefore, or in other words "the wisdom of God," can be nothing less than "a stone of stumbling and rock of offence," to the wisdom of the world.

VII.—"Christ, and *Him crucified!*" what an extraordinary centre for Philosophy! And yet

it must be accepted as the centre, or however agreeable your circumference may be to the natural understanding, we shall be obliged to condemn it as a mere periphrastic platitude, having no agreement with *Truth.* No one will be weak enough to say, that the doctrine of "Christ crucified" may be the centre of *Christianity,* but *not* of *Philosophy.* For if it be not the centre of Truth, it cannot be the centre of True Religion. If the Cross of Christ *is* the *true* exponent of the condition of man, it must also be accepted as fundamental to true philosophy. If the Cross of Christ is God's mirror, reflecting the true condition of a fallen world, we must consent to look thither for *right* views of things ; or, we shall see man and nature, as they are *not,* and not as they *are.* If Christianity is the revelation of *God's mind,* then Philosophy must accord with it, or, instead of being a reflection of Truth, it will be but a fabrication, more or less plausible, of untruth. If, because Christ was made flesh, it behoved Him to be crucified, in order that He might come into harmony with Himself and Godhead, then man and nature must follow His example and undergo dissolution, in order to return to harmony.

It is quite clear, that as Christianity is not a nature-religion, so neither can *True* Philosophy be

mere nature-philosophy. All nature-philosoph
must humble themselves, and become crucifi
dead and buried, that True Philosophy may ar
"Christ crucified" is the end of mere nature. T
natural man is no more. He is obsolete; and
philosophy is obsolete. But how can the natu
mind discern, that, not nature, nor its own reas
but "Christ crucified," is the key to Divine Wisdo
impossible. He may assent to it on the te
mony of others, but he can only *discern* it
"The Spirit of Truth," given to him anew from G

VIII.—It is very instructive to observe
distinct tendency, or direction, which the Cross
Christ gives to the soul, as compared with t
which is given by the wisdom of the world. Fr
the wisdom of the world, the soul derives a deci
world-direction. But how can it derive a *wor*
ward bias from Christ crucified? The soul o
luminous with the Wisdom reflected from Calva
finds its eye and its aim carried beyond the wo
The Cross of Christ dissolves the spell which bi
the soul to the visible creation. The wisdom
the world enchants the soul with its prison, a
persuades it that it is no prison. The revelat
of the mystery of Christ crucified, dissipates
enchantment, and liberates the soul. Then

forward, it breathes another air, it breathes in Eternity, it lives and moves and has its being in Eternity. This is the true sphere of man; and that, and that only, which directs him thither, is true Wisdom.

IX.—Goethe also, another fascinatingly wayward spirit, of the giant species, accepted it as his calling, to free himself from all principles which were higher, or holier than his two great facts,—himself and this present world. The conditions under which man and nature are subject, instead of being subjected to a higher law, were *assumed* to be the Divine Law for him. He heard not the voice of God, calling him out of his own country, that is, out of himself, and away from his kindred, the progeny of thoughts and desires springing from the native ground of his own heart; but he heard the voice of his own heart, *as if it had been the voice of God.* The law of his life, therefore, was *a solemn blunder;* but he entertained the blunder so royally, and carried it out so magnificently, that all who long to be justified in following their own will and way, rather than God's will and way, regard their modern Jupiter Optimus Maximus, with great admiration.

X.—But a man has clearly no authority for jumping to the conclusion, that the truth about this lower creation, is absolute Truth. The facts pertaining to man and nature are truly facts *in their sphere:* but it is most unwarrantable to regard them as exponential of universal Truth. Mud is a sufficiently *actual* thing, but who thinks of making it a criterion by which to judge of the sun's substance? No one asserts that our present findings in Geology, include all geological truth; nor that our present astronomical facts include all possible astronomical facts. *Still less* may this outer, perverted, adulterous House of Nature, be regarded as a specimen, or criterion, of a pure Creation of God.

Wherefore, a man may be full of the knowledge of nature's facts, and exceedingly proficient in world-literature, and yet destitute of Truth. He may be ever learning, and yet void of the first essential for coming to "the knowledge of the Truth."

XI.—"The things which are seen are temporal," and temporal nature is a very partial teacher; but men will abide by this teacher and resist the "Teacher sent from God," because the former agrees with their fallen nature, while the latter

teaches the necessity of self-subjugation. Eph. iv. 21-24. God, by sending His Son into the world, has in effect said, 'Nature cannot give you the knowledge either of God or yourselves:' yet how many, with the air of men who are incapable of suspecting the sin and ignorance of their position, reply, 'Nature shall teach us, for Nature is the teacher sent from God.' These are they who know so much, that they cannot know the Truth; for they are like gorgeously painted windows, they carry too much themselves, to be mediums of pure light.

XII.—It pertains to the haste and rashness of a Nimrod, a self-willed spirit, to conclude, that, because nature can teach some things, she can teach all things. Man is greater, and after a higher order, than nature, and consequently for a higher end; how then should nature be able to instruct and educate *him?* Nature may easily degrade his affections and darken his intellect, and, at the same time, make him arrogant and heady. For it is the peculiarity of naturalism, that while it sets at nought the true human birthright, it fills the soul with the conceit of peculiar power and skill. Esau's line, although he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, is famous for dukes. Nimrod is always "a mighty one upon earth."

How should he not become mighty on the earth, if he makes his divine nature the slave of his five senses? He by no means gives up the idea of Heaven, for he thinks that he can lay his bricks in such order, as to reach Heaven by them. He disdains God's supernatural ladder; he will therefore make one himself out of nature's elements. Or, failing in that, he will go forth and found Assyria. And what gods are to be compared with the kings of Assyria? "Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?" Poor Nimrod, the sword in which he believes, cannot save him: his whole army falls before a sword, which, in his faith, has no existence.

He is only a specimen of all those who are caught and held by the mighty sophistry of nature-religion. The great tower of Babel, with such a base, and built with such precision, brick upon brick, brick upon brick, will surely stand for ever, thought the builders. A striking figure of the rationalistic edifice, which man constructs, not out of notions, or dreams, as he confidently thinks, but from ascertained facts, fact upon fact, fact upon fact. What can overthrow reason's grand temple of facts?

XIII.—This self-confident Assyrian rationalism is finely spoken to, in Ezekiel: "Behold the Assyrian, a cedar in Lebanon, *his height was exalted above all the trees of the field*, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long, because of the multitude of waters. All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations." (Only as it were a "little flock," quite a "peculiar people," and "not reckoned among the nations," could withstand the ensnaring attraction.) "Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches: for his root was by great waters." (Every thing about him was *real*, and from faith, or superstition, he derived no aid. His roots were firm in the actual earth, and nature's actual rivers, actual air and sunshine, made him what he was. And when all the powers of nature bring themselves forth in their noblest stature and proportions, the form is very bewitching.) "The cedars in the garden of God could not hide *him:* the fir trees were not like his boughs, and the chesnut trees were not like his branches; nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto *him* in beauty. So that all the trees of Eden, which were in the garden of God envied him." Eze. xxxi. The trees in the

garden of God are small bushes, compared with the Assyrian tree. Nature's rivers and sunshine are less friendly to *their* growth. Nature contains not the elements essential to the development of *their* majesty and glory. To the natural mind, the chief of all the trees in the garden of God, by the side of the magnificent growths of nature, is perfectly contemptible. "He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground." There is nothing here to attract "the great nations." That the power of God is revealed in such a form, rather than in the mighty forms of nature, is a report which they can in nowise believe. But the time cometh, in which they will see, that nature's flourishing growths, (although facts, and sustained by facts,) cannot sustain themselves; but that those, which have neither size nor show, according to nature, nevertheless carry within them, the very principle of eternal growth and glory. "*All the trees of the field shall know,* that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the Lord have spoken and have done it." Eze. xvii. 24.

XIV.—*How the Bible confounds mere naturalism!* Spiritual and eternal things are the

proper sphere of the Bible, and yet it will not let natural things alone. It meddles with the natural order of things. It will not let things be as nature has made them. It interferes with, and suspends natural laws. This is very annoying to the natural philosopher, who likes to think that God will and must work according to *his* ideas of order. The poor slave of his philosophy thinks in his heart that God is the slave of it too. And for this reason he cannot subscribe to the Divine authority of the Bible, *as a whole.* The God of the Bible does not always work in submission to natural laws. Sometimes a furious fire will not touch those who are cast into the very midst of it, but instead thereof, will perversely consume those who throw them in. Sometimes, rivers do not flow in their proper course, they stop short and stand upright in a heap. Sometimes, iron swims. At another time, a single pot of oil, in the possession of a widow, becomes, in the act of pouring out, not only enough to fill all the vessels which she has, but all that she can borrow. Sometimes, men at midnight are brought out of prison, and through iron gates, and yet the gates are found securely locked in the morning. At another time, the wind and sea, instead of obeying their own course, obey a Man. At another time, "two small fishes" are

divided into fish enough for some thousands of hungry people. Sometimes, even a dead man, instead of remaining a dead man, has been known, at the word of command, to quit his grave and live again. Now are not these things enough to bring the Bible into discredit, with any really scientific mind? Every one knows that nature is uniform in her operations: what then must be the fate of a book, which introduces a disturbing hand? And farther, many of the things which it affirms, are physical impossibilities. Is it likely that a student of the laws of nature, can receive that book as the Word of God, which gravely records such contradictions of the known order of things? Yes, my dear questioner, a *student* of nature's laws can and does receive, *as the Word of God*, the Book, which contains these, and many more such things. A *slave* of the laws of nature cannot, for he is an Egyptian, he is *under* nature and her laws, instead of being *above*, and looking down upon nature and her laws. Nature and all her laws are *subject* to the God of the Bible; but the slave of nature can only believe in a God that is *subject to nature.* Myriads of such facts, as the Bible relates, would be no stumbling-block to the reason that is of Faith. Sense enslaves the understanding. Faith liberates it, brings it into a large place, into God's

own sphere. The physical universe, or nature, is, to the poor slave of sense, supreme master. Faith looks upon all things as *spiritual in their origin,* and therefore as still *under* spiritual laws, and completely *subject* to the Will of God. To the perception of faith, "the whole earth is full of His Glory:" to sense, and also to the reason which is under tribute to sense, the whole earth is in chains to physical necessity.

XV.—Confounded are all whose reason is of their senses. Blessed are they whose reason is of faith. Vast is the difference, between the understanding being subject to nature's appearances, and nature's appearances being subject to the understanding. Such is the distinction between nature-philosophy, which is founded on *appearance,* and absolute Philosophy, which is "the Wisdom of God in a Mystery." O ye nature-kings, who are yet no kings before God, but slaves rather, be instructed now, before you perish from the way. For there is verily a rod of iron, which will dash in pieces, your potter's vessel. The whole structure of your reason, which you think so strong and sound, *is* but a potter's vessel. To wit, it is a thing of man's device, the whole substance of which is derived from nature. It is of the earth, earthy.

XVI.—It is obvious that learning will never come to the knowledge of the Truth, if the learner be at fault. If, as Revelation affirms, man's *nature* is at fault, then his will, or the inclination of his affections, will be at fault; and if his will be faulty, the first principles of his understanding will be faulty; and consequently, his conclusions, though naturally and justly derived from his premises, will nevertheless be false, because his premises, processes and conclusions are in agreement, not with eternal Truth, but with his own fallen nature. God asserts the degeneracy of his nature: he *assumes* its integrity. Of necessity his whole process of thought must be false, so long as his reason and affections accord with himself and his idol, nature, rather than with God?

And it is worse than frivolous for him to *assume*, that temporal nature accords with the Divine Nature, after God has testified that it does not. He may not at all relish the charge that he is partial and essentially one-sided:—that his partiality for what he is *by nature*, has warped his judgment, and that, consequently, his reasoning is within the circle of his own will. But is it not evidence enough of the partiality of his will, and indeed of the guilt of that partiality, that he defends his first birth, or natural condition, after God has

found fault with it? and that he persists in believing, or in affecting to believe, that it is according to God? when God has declared that it is according to corrupt and transitional nature, but not according to His Nature.

God has concluded it under sin. Now he will grant that he has *committed* sin; but the idea that his *nature* is under sin, is very repugnant to him, and therefore he concludes that it is not under sin. God testifies that the law of his nature is the law of sin, but he *likes not* to think so, and therefore, he replies, 'Nay, but it is the law of God.' "The carnal mind is enmity against God:" he answers, the carnal mind is of God, and in agreement with God. "The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God." The carnal mind contradicts, saying, 'I am subject to the law of my nature, and the law of my nature *is* the law of God.' "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God:" 'Nonsense,' his inward thought replies, 'I am already in the kingdom of God.' The blunder of Nicodemus is the universal blunder of the natural man: he thinks that he can be initiated into the kingdom of Truth *by teaching*. But he no sooner appeals to *The* Teacher, than he hears, to his vast surprise, that not by teaching, but only by re-

generation, can he come to see things *as they are.* "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them," because they are not discernible to the natural mind, for "they are spiritually discerned." He affirms, that whatever is foolishness to *his* reason, *is* foolishness; and that the true things of God are those things which are obtained from the study of nature's laws. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," and its affections and its mind are according to the flesh, and all its reasonings are according to the flesh, and its highest wisdom, when it seems farthest from the flesh, is still fleshly;—that is, within the compass of nature, but utterly without the kingdom of God.

It is both wayward and paltry of a man to determine, that, by abiding in the conditions and limitations of his first birth, he can come to the knowledge of Truth. If he will abide the mere creature of nature, then he shall be the heir of nature: certainly not the heir of God. And we all know the sad inheritance, or rather the dismal, pitiless "chamber of horrors," to which nature conducts all *her* heirs. If he will kick against the doctrine of a second birth, a birth according to God, then he may learn and learn, and be evermore learning, but he will "never be

able to come unto the knowledge of the Truth." "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."—He shall not only not come, but he shall "*not be able* to come to the knowledge of the Truth." And wherefore shall he not be able? Because *by nature*, he is only qualified to know *appearance;* and Truth he can no more know, without being born again, than the chick in the egg, which is its first birth, can see the light before its second birth, which is the rending of the shell. The caterpillar *must be born again* in order to know the winged life. Such is the necessity for man's new birth. Till then, the knowledge of the Truth is impossible to him. Every life has its own intelligence, but not that of the sphere above itself. The intelligence of nature's life is intelligence within her own sphere; but it pierceth not nature's veil, and knows nothing of absolute truth. Man may loathe the idea of the inability of his natural understanding to know the Truth, he may resist it, he may even call God to task, for allowing him to be conceived in sin, and born under conditions which render *re*generation a necessity; but let the dear creature of nature writhe, and complain as he please, unless he be "born again, not," as at first, "of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God," he shall "*never be able* to come to the knowledge of the Truth." If

he is too proud and self-willed to acquiesce in God's gracious proposal, to make him a "new creature," and thus to bring him into harmonious relationship with Himself and His Kingdom, while it is the solemn penalty, it is only the inevitable consequence, of his perverseness, that he should be caught and held in the snare of "strong delusions," and that he should accept from his heart, and confirm with his reason, *appearance* for *Truth.*

"He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not *a lie in my right hand?*"

"The god of this world *hath blinded* the minds of them that believe not."

"Then *He opened their understanding* that they might understand the Scriptures."

AIDS TO THOUGHT.

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CHRISTIANITY, according to the New Testament, is the surrender of our first nature to the likeness of Christ's death, that we may also attain to the likeness of Christ's Resurrection. The popular method is to clothe our first nature with Christian forms, and to call that, Christianity.

THE Apex of Grecian development was, for those who could read it, as much a prophecy of the Incarnation, as that which was given through the Hebrew prophets. 'There was an immense difference in the prophecy,' you say. I know there was. The one was Grecian, and the other Jewish. Likewise, as you remember, there was a wide difference in the methods, by which the birth of Christ was announced to Jewish shepherds and Persian princes. The one, was God's way in Israel, the other was God's way in Persia. With

respect to Greece, tell me, was there not at least a Divine effort towards expression. I confess, the more I study the expression which *was realized*, the more distinctly I hear its prophetic voice saying, 'The WORD is at hand.' It gives evidence of a marvellous endeavour, however blind, to *embody* and give *form* to the unutterable, the Divine. Historians, moralists and poets travailed with the spirit of unity. Doubtless, they were inspired, after their kind, with light and energy from Him, Who is One and All, and Who also was *coming into the world.* Even Sculptors were possessed, to their very finger ends, with a spirit that longed to *appear.*

Do you object again, that the prophecy was lost upon the nation? I reply, the Athenian prophecy was not at all more lost upon the Greeks, than the Hebrew prophecy, upon the Jews. As the Hebrew books are sacred to the Church, so *the World* holds sacred the works of the Greeks, as the consummation of Art and the treasury of wisdom. After Phidias had sculptured, Socrates had spoken, and Plato had written, what could be given to the world, but Reality Itself, Wisdom Itself, Unity Itself? "The WORD *was* made flesh, and dwelt among us."

THE Church, as "the fulness of Him" Who is the Fulness of God, is too great an idea to be wrought out in a few ages. The *outer*most development of the Divine Nature, is the grand end, towards which God is working. Untold millenniums have been contributing to this end. Some millenniums have contributed, *apparently*, very little. They have been given up to the development of evil, but the development of evil is in order to its *subjugation;* and when subjugated, it becomes the ground of Divine manifestations. But since the old fish-Saurians, beast-Saurians and bird-Saurians,—those huge, winged, infernal lizards, had the upper hand here, the progress is very considerable.

We ought painfully to feel the corruption of the Church, because it is the corruption of Christ's Body. The divisions of the Church, the torn and distracted condition of the Church, we should bitterly deplore, because it is the torn and bleeding *Body of our Lord.* But along with our grief, we should rejoice with confidence, and wait with patience. The Church will become perfect, and perfectly one; because the Church is the Body of Christ, and Christ is the Body of God. But it will not presently come to perfection.

NATURE'S manifoldness, in itself, lives not: in man *it lives*. But man dies. Man's death therefore, is the passing away of the earth and the heavens; and according to the number of human dissolutions, from the beginning of the world, so many are the prophecies, that the natural universe shall be dissolved. Human nature must be dissolved, in order that it may become perfectly, or divinely human: so must universal Nature be dissolved, in order that it may become The House of God and of Truth.

Universality, Unity, Eternity. Universality is a wondrous manifoldness; but it proceeded from *One God.* Essential Unity therefore must underlie the manifoldness. With creatures, Unity has to be divided, and distributed piecemeal, that they may see and know what it includes. But in man, universality becomes Unity. He is an image of *The One;* and Unity is Eternal. Therefore, universality, unity and eternity meet in Humanity. I might even say more, for God is in Humanity. God *and His creation* have a fuller meaning than has God alone. And is not the Divine Humanity of the Lord representative of God *and* His creation?

WHAT a delightful change of air it is for the soul, to get away from the dust, vanity and weariness of the every-day world; and to slip within the gates of the always great, always serene, always awe-inspiring eternal world! And this we do, as often as we retire from our senses into our spirit. Is it nothing that we can withdraw from the beaten roadside of this outer life, and enter a world, which always tranquilizes us, and fills us with wonder and worship? To this higher world, (which, when the soul lives in herself, confronts the soul,) we are indebted for the lasting sublimity and freshness of human life.

When earth-born impulses and desires invade the soul, and make her feverish and restless, let her enter her own kingdom, and be embraced once more, by dear, still, awful Eternity.—Her desires will die, her restlessness will subside, and instead thereof, prayers, calm and holy, will be generated within her. True prayer is *from* God, *to* God; and, like God's corn, involves the harvest which we desire to reap from it.

CHRIST has carried His work lower than the lowest want of the humblest member of His body;

for He not only came into the world, but descended into dark Hades, and curiously wrought the ground of the Church's being and stability "in the lowest parts of the earth." He has also carried His work higher than the highest want of the highest creature.

There is no creature so low and base, that Christ cannot meet his state, and minister to him his humblest need: nor is there any creature so high, that Christ cannot minister to him far higher things, than have entered his heart to conceive.

SINCE Christ, Who descended lower than the earth, thence ascended far above all heavens: let us learn that the lower we carry our work and conquests, the higher we shall ascend in glory.

SIN *originated* with a prince of Light. The foundation of Hell and the beginning of all evil date from Heaven and the Presence of God. Hence the unknown power of evil, hence its consummate wisdom: hence too the awful doom, under which the original sinner has been laboring these long ages, and which, as we are told, is

even yet to become far heavier. The sin of Adam and of the human race is not original, but only an inoculation from original sin.

Man lost his innocence and his glory through Satan. But the devil did not obtain what he succeeded in taking from man. It remained in God's power and gift. God's decree was, that what man had lost through another, he should regain through Another.

WE must love God even more for what *chastises* us, than for what *pleases* us. For the good that pleases corrupt nature, feeds and strengthens the same; but the evil, that is displeasing to it, causes it to sigh its life away. And when our own spirit giveth up the ghost, God's Spirit taketh its place. Wherefore, our life is death, but our death,—*that is life.*

SACRED GROUND; or,

SOMETHING SOWN THERE.

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SOMETHING sown, *where?* Every where. There is a sun hidden in the sun, there is a subtle, living ground hidden in the soil, there is a sea hidden in the sea, and an atmosphere in the atmosphere. Light is handed down to us from remote ages, not as light, but as a compact mineral, and is sold so much per ton. We have a sufficient reserve of gas-light in our coal-mines to light ten thousand Londons for ten thousand years to come. That is something. I did not say too much; there is something sown *every where.* Dull and stupid as matter is, there is something in it not wholly stupid. Rub your walking-stick smartly, with your hand, for five minutes. Why did you stop in one minute? 'Too hot,' you say. Even the dead stick then is not so dead, that it may not be awakened into flame. A rope passing over the bulwarks at a certain velocity sets the ship on fire. And these dark clouds, what can be duller than they? But out of the dense vapour, I see nimble fire breaking.

Vapour then is a hiding place for something which is not vapour. The dew-drop again is condensed vapour; yet I can see a little sun therein. Is not nature a screen, wonderfully contrived, to defend us from her own excess of glory? She is a gorgeous cloud-building, reared on a sea of Light. The world is a vast field, with celestial fire every where hidden in it. Yea, God is in this place, and the gate of Heaven is every where. Heaven runs through the world, as an essence through a substance, as light through water, as the soul through the kingdom of the body. Whether we are in the house of God, or not, depends not so much upon where we are, as in what condition we are.

II.—A lonely traveller, passing a night on the moor, finds the midnight air full of bright and busy creatures. Another, keeping his sheep far away from the abodes of men, sees more in a bush, than some see in sun, moon and stars put together. Another, finds the whirlwind to be a chariot, out of which God speaks to him. Another, discovers that in the very ass on which he is riding, there is a Presence that can reprove him. I do not know that any one has ever been burnt in water; but I know this, that there is fire enough

secreted in water to burn the world. And what is quite as strange, as the idea of burning any one in water, is the fact that three young men are known to have walked at ease in the midst of a raging fire, and found therein a cool atmosphere of defence. In that hour, they saw that every thing is what it is, not from itself, but from ONE Who giveth to all things their law. Therefore, as with one mouth, they called upon fire and heat, winds and storms, showers and dew, ice and cold, frost and snow, seas and rivers, lightnings and clouds, nights and days, summer and winter, to bless the Lord, and to exalt His Name for ever. And hearest thou not even now, the song of the Seraphim? "*The whole earth is full of His Glory.*" His glory is *something*,—yea, something *considerable*, I imagine. Is it not more than all that we can see with our outer eyes? Perhaps in the end it will prove to be the only thing,—the only thing that hath *essential being*. I, for one, am of that belief. God affirms His own existence, and at the same time declares that He only has absolute existence. "I AM; and there is none else." "Verily, Thou art a God that hidest Thyself." "Upon all the glory there is a covering." "He holdeth back the face of His Throne, and spreadeth His cloud upon it."

III.—The whole material universe is "*His cloud.*" Truly "a great cloud and a fire infolding itself," and in the midst of the fire, a purer fire, "as the colour of amber;" within the same, four-fold life in its too-wondrous unity, and within all, and through all, and over all, the *One*, Whom no word can express, no thought conceive. But forasmuch as man is himself a cloud-involved mystery, an endless spirit, with the fire of eternity and the four-fold life burning and living in him, it is his privilege to pierce the universe-cloud, and to commune with the Hidden One. God is in the midst of him, as on Mount Sinai. In His Light he sees light. "We see through a glass *darkly*;" let us be grateful that we can see *through* at all. Do beasts as well as men see through the glass? No, they are subject to their five senses, poor brutes. Their end fulfils itself on this side eternity. There are men who profess to be, ("as brute beasts,") incapable of seeing any thing but husk. For all the world, I would not say it of them, if they did not claim this degradation for themselves. If man is destined to play his chief part, not in this outer scene, but in a kingdom, hidden from his senses,* it is only right and proper, that he should

* Not that the kingdom of Heaven is hidden from *Sense*, but only from man's present brute-senses, which are not strictly *his* senses. The kingdom of God is eternally objective to incorrupt and eternal senses.

have some apprehension of the glory, which God has defended by the cloud of nature. To be human, and not to enjoy the revelation of *God* in nature, *God* in Scripture, and *God* in ourselves, is to be *lost.*

IV.—The Bush of Moses is no solitary wonder, but a small specimen of a universe of wonders. To the man whose eyes are open, as well as to the Seraphim, the whole creation is a Bush full of glory. It gloweth and burneth with God's Presence:—God in the Bush, the Bush in God. There is some contrast between the outer paradise, which so fascinates the myriads of the great world-plain, (even righteous Lot among them,) and True Paradise. The world-paradise having the Dead Sea, the awful Asphaltic lake, lying under: the True Paradise having the Eternal Sea of Living Glory, lying under. God hath founded *His* Paradise upon such a Sea, and established it upon such floods.

The Scriptures are another Bush full of glory. "Open Thou mine eyes," &c. Blessed is that traveller, who when he cometh to the back places of this desert-life, sees Holy Scripture, to be really *Holy* Scripture, that is, all on fire with "Spirit and Life" from God. The man who ceases to be captivated with *the face* of this desert-world, comes

to the *back* of it; and, if he be an heir of glorious eternity, he sees more in "the backside of the desert," than he ever saw in its front.

When the Burning Bush of Holy Scripture, and the burning bush of a man's life meet together, thenceforward he is a seer of the invisible, and his life transcends the world. He becomes a Mount-Horeb man, he makes excursions into eternity, he talks with God. The fiery Bush is for man, and yet he stands in awe before the Bush. It is his own, high, august life, that he stands in awe of. It may open upon him suddenly, but he cannot suddenly get used to it. The day will come, when even in Heaven, which is God's Bush-full of glory in the highest, he will feel like a child *at home*. For the Lord of Glory will change him from glory to glory, until perfect congeniality is brought about between him and the Eternal Glory.

V.—The process by which this is brought about may sometimes make you afraid:—the fiery trial, namely, which is to try you; and death, which is to kill you. But if by faith you can look, not on the trial, nor on death, but on God, Who is in them, courage will take the place of fear. The Bush may be ugly; but hear the voice out of the midst of the Bush: "It is I, be not afraid." Is

it your own change, your own death, that you dread? You, poor timid Bush, though you be killed, you shall not be consumed. It is the way to Paradise. "Have faith in God," fall asleep in the arms of Jesus; and, after death has killed you, you will only find yourself a more beautiful Bush, capable of carrying a great deal more of the Fire of the Divine Glory. Now, the Bush prevails over the glory: then, the glory will prevail over the Bush.

It is not the will of God to bring upon you the flood of His glory, to consume you, nor even to terrify you. He will bring upon you from time to time, as much as you can bear. He could easily overpower you with His glory, but He will not. He will purify you therewith, strengthen and comfort you therewith, and as you can bear more, He will give you more and more. The degree of glory which an angel can carry, would wither and consume a man. And the glory in which one angel finds his rest and heaven, would oppress and confound another. God fills each creature with as much glory as he can enjoy. It is with the creatures of God, much the same as with the vegetable kingdom and the sun. The grass, the flowers, the trees, grow and thrive, and become glorious under a certain degree of the sun's glory; but too high a

degree of the same, would consume the whole vegetable world. Moses could bear more of God than any other Israelite. But an angel's glory would have consumed Moses. And perhaps a Seraph's glory would consume an angel.

VI.—The universe, which is the House of God, and therefore a House-full of fiery Energy, must be arranged according to perfect order, and every thing in it be subject to a wonderful law of *measure*. Perhaps an insight into this profound law, led Pythagoras to affirm, that the doctrine of numbers involved all wisdom.

Thy Heavens, and Thy earth, and all Thy works, praise Thee, O God; but each according to its sphere of nearness to Thee, or remoteness from Thee. According to Thy glory in each sphere, such is Thy praise, and according to Thy praise, is the joy of Thy creatures.

VII.—Behold, and wonder with great admiration, that though God is not to be confounded with the creature, nor the creature with God, yet God is very near to the creature, and the creature very near to God. *Very near. Nothing so near.* He is near to those who are farthest from Him. And, in another sense, He is far from those who are

nearest to Him. In His Humility, Meekness and Love, God makes Himself one with His creatures. And yet there remains, and must remain, for ever, a great gulf between Him and His highest creatures. The greatest nearness is a nearness that convinces the creature of an infinite distance. Nearness, instead of being detrimental to the spirit of worship, or the awe of worship, increaseth it. Therefore, if to eternity, our progress is to be nearer to God, and nearer still, we want no other proof that our self-abasement will deepen, and with our self-abasement, our adoration of God.

VIII.—Night, solitude, silence, sickness;—why have these a peculiar solemnity for man? Because under these circumstances the slumbering instinct, which the soul has of invisible and eternal things, awakes, and awes him with the impression of unseen company,—as though something, which does not appear, were ready to appear,—as though in a moment the hidden world might disclose itself. Man is related to something that he has never seen, cannot see, to something indeed that refuses to be defined. Hence his hours of reverie, hence too his passion for fiction and romance. The actual is not enough for him; it is too tame. Even children show more interest in ghost-stories,

which chill their blood and terrify them, than in any thing which you can present to their senses. The fact is, the world and all that it contains, leave the soul unexplained to herself. Though she is here, and though the endless series of sights and sounds and occupations, is strangely calculated to bury her in self-forgetfulness, there yet abides with her a certain vague, ineffaceable impression, that she belongs to altogether another sphere, and is destined to inherit it. The old Bible-narratives and Bible-visions are more homogeneous with the soul, than all the world-wonders of our century. And wherefore?—Just because those narratives represent God and man in close connection; and in those visions, still, awful eternity seems to open upon us.

IX.—The *apparent* man is a house of concealment for the very man. Nature is a house of concealment for God. We carry on our operations by our bodies, but all the while, we ourselves remain in secret. God works before our eyes, exposes to us His work, and hides Himself. God is Light, but the light which we see, is the thick darkness which hides Him. So hidden is He by the outer principle in which He works, that His creatures have even asked whether His work is not its own

worker? His work, which, apart from Him, is nothing, has been wondered at, studied and even worshipped; while He, Who is All, has been forgotten, and His very existence denied.

X.—In a world where God is so hidden, it is not possible that Godlike souls should be *at home.* Their portion cannot be in that which is foreign to their deepest affections. Where God is hidden from view, there, the light, the joy, the treasure of Godlike souls must also be hidden from view. Godlike souls and their inheritance must be as distinct from the world in which they now are, as God is distinct from the solar energies, by which He quickens and preserves life in nature. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." And they know that their kingdom is "not of this world."

But the eternal fortune of Godlike souls is hidden, in the same manner as seed is hidden in the earth. It is hidden, not that it may remain hidden, but that in due time, it may shew itself. If that which is sown has *life* in it, it will grow, and *insist upon manifestation.* God has certainly sown this creation with His own seed; and the seed of God must be pregnant with Divine energy, and therefore must be effectual for its revelation, in its own time.

"Light is *sown* for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."

XI.—By the righteous and the upright in heart, we are to understand the friends and children of God, in opposition to the friends and children of the world. "The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God." "Ye are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." He is "the Light of the world," and all those who derive their life from Him, are "children of light" and heirs of light. Who can doubt that the whole universe is sown with light and glory, prosperity and joy, for the children of God? No one can imagine it to be otherwise. The plan and constitution of the universe must be such, that, in the end, it shall bring forth glory and pleasure to the household of God. In the meantime, He bids them, under all their sorrows, to rejoice in hope: their Harvest is sure. When God receives His final income from this universe, (He *will* receive it,) then His children will receive their fortune. God's inheritance and theirs are the same.

XII.—In order to give proof of "the faith and patience" of His children, God has appointed them, for a set time, to be tempted by the false

light, the false prosperity, and the false pleasure. The children of the world flourish like a green bay tree, while the children of faith lie under their Cross. The former *have* their Paradise, the latter are waiting for theirs. But as the eclipse of the sun is only for a brief space: so also, in relation to eternity, it is only for a little while, that the light and glory of the world will eclipse the Light and Glory, which are the hope of Godlike souls. *Their* light, *their* prosperity and joy, are not yet; but they are *sown*. And nothing is so certain to spring and thrive, as the glory and gladness of the Kindred of God. "Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh." "Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep."

XIII.—Light and gladness are sown in God's children, and sown in the whole universe for them, *as they were once sown in Christ.* The True Eternal Light was sown in Him from His conception. But like *sown* seed, it was so hidden that no one knew Him, neither could know Him, except by express revelation from His Father, in Heaven. A few chosen witnesses were permitted once to see the Eternal Light break forth from its hiding-place and suffuse all His garments. And they saw, and bare record that the very Ground and Source of all Glory

and Joy were there. They cried out: "Master, it is good for us to be here." But the vision was but for a moment. The Eternal Splendour became entombed in His flesh again, as before.

XIV.—But the Divine Glory which was sown in Christ *is risen in Him.* "The Lord is risen indeed." What was hidden and buried in Him, during His humiliation, is come abroad. The glory of God set in Adam; but behold, it is risen again in Second Adam. The glory of God will as certainly have a *universal resurrection,* as Christ is risen. He is but the First fruits of the whole harvest. God is sure of His own. And whatever is sure to God, is sure also to those who are His. God has no harvest apart from His children. His glory and joy are sown in them, and for them. Their glory and joy are the resurrection of God's seed from within them, and the outshining of the same from them. The seed of God is the Life of His Son; and its development is the glorification of His children.

XV.—The birth of Christ into nature was the Glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, coming into the world, under the eclipse of our flesh;—teaching us that all the heirs of God, during

mortal life, are under an eclipse. But in resurrection, that which eclipsed the glory, is eclipsed by the glory. No more eclipse for the Man Christ Jesus, in Himself. In His members, He is still under eclipse. But neither He nor they will rest till they are *like Him.* I passed by the November corn-field, and lo, I saw nothing but earth, looking so cold and dreary, under a dull chilly sky ; but I passed by the same field the following August, and no earth was visible, for it was covered with its golden crop, and above it, a brilliant sky without a cloud. Has the material universe fallen into a long November? Be of good cheer, the Eternal August is coming.

XVI.—During the seed-time of this mortal-life, is it not better to be Lazarus, clothed with cold poverty, but with the Eternal Light and Gladness *sown* in him, than to be Dives, with his light and gladness crowning him already, (a light and gladness, not of the Divine sort,) but with eternal darkness and sorrow sown in him? O all ye, who are compassed about with your own sparks, beware, lest your sparks should occupy and infatuate you, until your seed-time is passed, and the eternal glory and gladness *not* sown in you. Can any thing be more melancholy, than the prospect of all your sparks

going out, (they are certain all to go out,) but no prospect of the eternal glory and gladness rising for you? They will rise, and rise for wretched Lazarus, and many a child of sorrow; but unless you see to it, that they are *sown* in you, they will not rise in *you*, nor for *you*.

XVII.—What a mystery of a world!—that light should be sown in its darkness, and gladness in its sorrow! But this is only for *some*. For others, darkness is sown in their light, and sorrow, in their gladness. Solemn contradictoriness! And yet, pure, awful, loving Justice reigns through all, over all. Light and gladness, the Eternal sort of Light and Gladness, are sown *for the righteous*, and for no others. All those who have "the course of this world" in their hearts, rather than the holy law of the universe, get their harvest now,—the best they can, from the present order of things. The holy law of the universe in the heart, is the same as Christ in the heart. He is the Law of God for ever and ever. From eternity to eternity, He is the Absolute WORD,—Law itself, Order itself, Life itself; and He is the One "Law of The Spirit of Life," in all righteous creatures, whether in Heaven or earth. Righteous souls, have no desire to be crowned in an unrighteous world

No, say they, not the world's harvest for us: the world's harvest is only a mock-harvest. Let our time in this world, therefore, be a grey, tearful, yet inly radiant, seed-time. Better to sow wheat, than to reap thistle-bloom. Better to sow Christ, than to reap Mammon. If we sow Reality, we shall reap Reality by and by. If we sow to corruption, we shall reap corruption. If we sow incorruptible seed, we shall gather from it an incorruptible harvest some day. Most determinedly, by the grace of God, we will decline receiving our glory and gladness, during the devil's day. "The Lord's Day" may not be immediately, but at the appointed time, it will certainly break upon this outer creation. We will wait for it. "The Lord's Day" shall be our day. When the Light of His Eternal Truth, and the Holy Gladness thereof, triumph in this world, it will be soon enough for us to triumph. In the meantime, let us go on sowing God's seed. He that soweth it sparingly, into the eternal seed-field of his soul, shall reap, likewise, sparingly; but he that soweth it bountifully, shall reap bountifully, in "the Day of the Lord."

A STRIKING ANTITHESIS.

—o—

"Thou makest darkness, and it is night:
Wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.
The young lions roar after their prey,
And seek their meat from God.
The sun ariseth; they gather themselves together,
And lay them down in their dens.
Man goeth forth unto his work,
And to his labor until the evening."

Psa. civ. 20—23.

If these simple and well known facts pertaining to the outward world, did not cover a deep meaning, we can scarcely imagine that they would have a place in the inspired Liturgy of the Church. But God's works in a lower sphere, must be illustrative of His works in a higher sphere. God works like Himself in every sphere. The correspondence, therefore, of His operations in nature, with the operations of His grace, admits not of a question. To regard the first chapter of Genesis for instance, as all the fathers did, as significative of the stages of human regeneration, is perfectly just. If God once gives us His plan of restoring disorder to order, just because it is *His Plan*,

we may presume upon its universal application. Whether the chaos be of matter, or of spirit, the same Divine Spirit conducts the series of its transformations. Not only is the history of the creation a parable, but the every-day works and ways of God, in nature, are parables. Day unto day and night unto night, all the objects, laws and changes of heaven and earth, utter human speech.

Take the simple facts as they stand :—

I.—"*Thou makest darkness.*" Darkness is a part of Divine order. At least, in the physical universe it is so. And, I suppose, in this respect, as in all other respects, the material universe represents the spiritual. If the material universe did not correspond with the spiritual, there could be no coherence between them. But we know that there is a coherence between them, for both heaven and hell pour their influences into nature and man.

"Darkness," I have heard it said, "is nothing more than the absence of light." You might as well say, that a corpse is nothing more than the absence of the soul. A corpse, although a very inane somewhat, is *somewhat*, if you please. Darkness, likewise, is quite a positive somewhat. We are not to think of it as occasioned by the

setting of the sun. It is *not* occasioned by the setting of the sun. Darkness is here all day long. The earth abides quite as firmly under our feet by day as by night; that for one thing is a solid mass of darkness. And the dark atmosphere is present at noon-day, hidden in the solar ocean. Darkness is a creature of God. "*Thou makest* darkness." It is the name of a *thing*, as much as light is the name of a thing. We have solid darkness and fluid darkness, darkness in masses and darkness as gases. "God called the light, Day, and the darkness, He called Night." "Darkness is a substantive," says the school-boy—"it is the name of something that exists." According to the vulgar use of the word, *substance*, darkness is much more *substantial* than light, and, beyond all comparison, heavier. So far as we know, darkness is necessary to the revelation of light. What are colors, but signs of the junction between light and darkness?—indicating the mode and measure in which different dark substances are capable of receiving and reflecting light.

Universal darkness is *a house for light.* The atmosphere is an ocean of darkness, and the ether that floats above the atmosphere, is a still subtler ocean of darkness; but they are admirable dwelling-places and vehicles for light. Darkness is that, upon

which, or through which, the light shines. "Thou makest darkness." It is an essential part of God's work. Perhaps, (but I fancy there is no need of saying, perhaps,) every creature in heaven is in himself darkness, yet so finely organized, as to be in the highest degree receptive and transmissive of the Eternal Light? The holy angels certainly know that they would be instantly dark spirits, if God withdrew His Presence.

II.—"*It is Night; wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.*" Darkness, as well as light, serves its own purposes. Light is good for flowers, but it is not so good for their *roots*. There would be no flowers long if the roots did not abide in darkness. Darkness is essential to those things which flourish in the light. Eyes rejoice in light, but the stomach, which is a great laborer, and very essential withal to the eyes, fulfils its patient work under darkness. Light is glorious, but there are creatures who cannot do with it, it overpowers them. Darkness is a defence. There are birds, insects and reptiles, who cannot bear the sun: they never venture out, till it is dark. The beasts of the forest are stupified by light. By day, they are inactive and sleep. "Thou makest darkness;"—the beasts of the forest awake, they

are clothed with energy, they go forth for their food and pleasure. They "*creep* forth." For about the creatures, whose element is darkness, there is always something subtle and stealthy:—as though they had no absolute authority for their existence. By slinking away before the light, they seem to confess:—'We belong only to the strife and twilight of the universe. When the great Day comes, *we* shall be no more.'

III.—"*The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.*" The young lions know not God, but God knows them, and understands the roar of their desire. Their meat is "*prey*," and they "*roar*" for it; for violence and impatience are the animus of their rank, brute flesh. God answers the *roar* of the lions: poor brutes, it is their nature to be fierce and restless till they are satisfied. Awful is the midnight forest, when its fierce tenants awake to their infernal concert,—when the roar of the lions, the screams and yells, squalls and howls of other beasts, are rising from earth to heaven. They are the prayers of the forest under night. God expects no meeker prayers from His wild beasts.

IV.—"*The sun ariseth; they gather themselves*

together and lay them down in their dens." Great wonder-working God, Thou clothest Thy strength with beauty. Thy Beauty is Thy Power. How dreadful is Thy Gentleness to the ungentle! Thou bringest no greater force to bear upon Thy wild and dreadful beasts, than the rising of the sun. So have I read in the book of the Wars of Heaven, that the meek angels of His Presence, through the blood of *The Lamb*, in them, overcame the Dragon and his angels. And I have read a vision of future things, in which a little child holds all beasts in stillest awe.

Also Thy sun, O Lord, the wonder of the universe, and the great power thereof, ariseth without anger and noise. Very meekly Thy sun ariseth; for he confoundeth not, too suddenly, even the beasts. By little and little he riseth upon them, that they may have time to wind up their carousal and disappear.—It is enough. The yelling, the screaming, the howling, the roaring, are over. The furious ones prey no more: light makes dastards of them. They are not children of light, *they* are not. They gently retire, they lie down in their dens. It is Day. There are children of the Day, and there are children of Darkness. While the beasts had their sport, man slept. Now the beasts sleep; and man rises, and "goeth forth unto his work and to

his labor, until evening." The world is yielded up to Day and to *man.*

And now we must go over the ground again, and find *a human sense*, a Sermon of God to man.

V.—"*Thou makest darkness, and it is night.*" Nature is a great darkness, in which the kingdom of God appears not. "It is Night;" but a *wonderful* night. There is *a* light in nature, a candle of God, shining in the darkness, but *the candle* is lit, because the Very Light is absent. The face of God is shut out from nature,—*by* nature, I ought to say. The True Light is not to be seen in nature's skies. Nature is a huge organization of Night. God has organized it. He has brought it under law, and made it to reflect His glory,—an immense advance upon the lawlessness of the great night. It is not any longer, chaotic night, but Night travelling through vast cycles of changes towards Break of Day,—God's Day. Fallen man needs a screen. He could not subsist in the light of God's Face. He is himself an organization of darkness. His eye, which of all his organs, is most akin to light, is in itself utter darkness. The representative character of nature is the work of God; but there is much in nature, attributable both to angelic and human apostacy

from Him. God is not the author of confusion, or chaos; but He is the Author of Cosmos. Apostacy from God necessarily becomes brutish. Apostacy is night. The devil is Night. He is that *old* serpent, he is the great red Dragon, he is the leviathan of the abyss, he is the first of the wild and the fierce kind, and the ground and beginning of the wild, beastly life. "He is king over all the children of pride." Only God can set limits to his dominion. Under God, his empire is the whole night of nature and humanity. The Lord Himself, *in our nature*, found Himself under night. He was "with wild beasts" also, and subject to the assaults of the devil. He found how far this life, in the dark house of flesh, and under the darkness of nature, is from God and Heaven, and how near it is to Hell.

What shall we say then, of the greed and the cunning, the selfishness and tyranny of mankind? Are they not as subtle beasts before God, restless for prey, and stealthily seeking it, under the darkness both of nature and their souls? Such instincts and passions would have no chance before the Face of God. They are only possible on the nether side of the veil. The successes of worldly men are closely analogous to success in taking prey. The principles and affections of our animal nature are

fallen out of the sphere of human harmony, and are *comparatively* unclean. The clean beasts are only somewhat cleaner than the unclean. To be envious of worldly prosperity, is to be "as a beast before God." For worldly prosperity is of the night-kind, and not of the right human and day-kind. Judged from a worldly point of view, the brutish kind of prosperity may be very honorable, and, by all means, let it be honorable. For in its most unexceptionable form, it is a drag and a humiliation, to one who is brought into sympathy with the New Testament style and destiny of man, namely, with "the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Such a man feels most acutely, and profoundly, that "*a man's* life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

On account of the baseness and utter prostration, the subtlety and plausibility of their souls, the Lord speaks of some men as a "generation of vipers." Their very repentance is suspicious. The crocodile sheds tears when about to take its prey. Other men, the Lord styles "swine" and "dogs," and commands, that the right human things of His kingdom be not committed to them. Others again are "wolves" and "foxes," to deal with whom, the Lord counsels His disciples to engraft the wisdom of the serpent on the innocence of the dove.

But God has given all His human beasts a time of grace, in which to work out their salvation and become *men*, namely, the image of God; or, if not that, then to confirm their brutish life and their downward tendencies, and so to pass on to Eternal Night and the wild beasts.

VI.—"*The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.*" The violent eagerness of our sensual instincts and passions may well be called "lions." For strength and boldness, they are lions, for subtlety, they are serpents, and for insatiableness, they are wolves. But the wolfine passions assume the garb of innocence and love, and therefore they are as wolves *in sheep's clothing*. But however they clothe themselves, their nature abides the same,—eager, wily, restless and impatient. There is something ever ravenous about the desires of the natural man. It is scarcely permissible to follow the passions in detail. But take an absolutely necessary department of human activity, and consider, calmly, the eagerness of trade, the stratagems and impetuosity of trade, the noise and tumult of trade, throughout the world. If you would speak of the same under a parable, would it not run thus?—"The young lions roar after their prey, and

seek their meat from God." For the profits of trade are a kind of lawful prey, taken from one's fellow creatures. And surely, trade roars after its prey. Does not the trade-spirit mightily vociferate in its quest for the largest possible share of custom? All young lions do the best they can for themselves. If they chance upon plentiful prey, shall they hesitate to appropriate it? Shall they stop to consider that there are other young lions, whole herds of them, who are seeking after prey, and to whom it as much belongs as to them? By no means. The very idea is wholly contrary to the nature of the young lions. Let every lion, wolf, and jackal, keep a sharp look out *for himself*. That is the manner of the *king* of the beasts, and the same is law throughout his king*dom*. Search and see, if there be any higher, or holier principle, in the whole brute-universe, than "number One?" Scramble boys, scramble, and if you pick up a little dirt with your bread, who can help it, in a dirty world?

Far be it from me, that I should call the ambitious tradesman, ungodly. With all his cunning and address, does he not seek his prey *from God?* If by assiduity, tact, or any thing short of downright lying and cheating, he can direct the stream of custom in his own favor, he

will receive it from God, and give God thanks. In the particular matter of trade, he does not feel himself under any obligation to consider his neighbours, from whom the stream is diverted. Is it not one of the moral axioms in the trade-world, that, "There are no friends in trade?" What would become of brute-life, if it were over nice? A dusky morality is very convenient for many purposes. "Thou makest darkness;" and the beasts have a chance. Avaricious young lions have not the most sensitive conscience; but blunt as their conscience is, they "seek their meat *from God.*"

VII.—"*The sun ariseth, they*" (the night-beasts) "*gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.*" Wild and dark waters once covered the whole earth; they stood above the mountains: at the rebuke of God, they fled; they went up by the mountains and down by the valleys, and subsided in their beds. So long as man is a mere creature of nature, the high principles of his divine and immortal spirit are deluged by sensual and worldly principles. But the day of his new creation dawns, when God rebukes this ascendency. The impetuous waters, "which cast up mire and dirt," retire, and the tops of the mountains are seen. In plain words, the natural man becomes subject

to law, and the spiritual man lies open to the influences of Heaven.

So long as the appetites and passions are permitted to rule, "it is night," with the human spirit. During this night, the brutish human spirit is keenly awake and active; but the eternal man-child is fast asleep. "The Sun ariseth." God is man's Sun. When His Glory, in the Face of Jesus Christ, first breaks upon the soul, the affections of "the old man" are thrown into consternation. The end of the old dynasty is come, and the beginning of the new. The Sun of the soul rises more and more, nature's restlessness abates, the old masterful passions acknowledge their new Lord and King, and meekly lay themselves down. While nature, night, and the senses, hold the empire over him, man is a stranger to himself. Like Jonah, he is fast asleep in the hull of that that which carries him.

VIII.—"*Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor, until the evening.*" He is wakened out of sleep, he is risen from the dead, Christ has given him life. He is *man,* his eternal life is begun. He *goeth forth,* not as originally, when man went forth from God and Paradise, to Satan, self, and desert:—now he goeth forth from his

natural, or lost estate, (properly speaking his *un*natural estate,) in order to return to his first, which, as he will find, is strictly his *natural* estate. Man, in his *true* natural condition, is man *as God made him.* God calls man to go forth from nothing, but his *anti*-natural condition.

Man's work is to work his way back out of fallen life; to work in unity with Christ his Saviour, "until evening," that he may then go home, to the dear interior life and eternity. "Prepare to meet thy God." "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." For to this end, God is working in you. The rising sun will not break up your fallow ground: it shines upon it, and shews that it is fallow, but *you* must break it up, and sow it with good seed, unto your eternal harvest.

Be not slothful in this business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.—Here is a text much quoted by Ishmael:—Ishmael and his kind, in whom the wild nature is dominant, and the divine nature very weak. For they take for granted, that man's *business* is that which relates to the world and the flesh. The business, therefore, which is supremely human, is apt to be neglected by this class. On the essential *vanity* of all business pertaining to the mortal husk of man, they do not

dwell. If it be vanity, there is a mighty lure about it, which captivates them. Seeing that he is an eternal creature, the business of *man*, must be that which relates to his eternal well-being. According to the Lord Jesus, *man's business* is to labor for "the meat which endureth unto everlasting life," and to amass riches for himself, not in the vain world, which he is leaving, but in the eternal world, whither he is going. "Seest thou a man diligent in his business, he shall stand before kings." For he who makes it his business to acquire a divine and beautiful dominion over his lower nature, and all its vain desires, becomes a king unto God; and to eternity, this man will be an associate of all the kings of God. As many as are walking in the Sunlight of the Divine Presence, are surely diligent, and solemnly in earnest, to succeed in this great business, "serving the Lord."

It is no light work that man has to do by eventide. Stroke by stroke of Time's pendulum is ticking off his mortal life, and bringing near the solemn twilight, which ushers in Eternal Day, or Eternal Night.—*Which?* "They that were *ready* went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut."

AIDS TO THOUGHT.

—o—

O LORD, Thou hast permitted me, through my follies, sins and failures, to know myself, and I am humbled, yea, I am sore displeased with myself; and behold, I turn from myself to Thee. Lord, my whole being turns to Thee. My *whole* being never turned from Thee. Therefore, more returns to Thee, than ever strayed from Thee. Scarcely with intention did I turn my back on Thee, but with profound and thorough intention, do I turn my face to Thee. Never could I seek the world with my *whole heart;* but Thee do I seek with more than my whole heart. For I know it is Thy Spirit in my heart, Which turns me to Thee. Hear, O Lord, my prayer, which goeth forth from a heart that knoweth both the bitterness of sin and Thy sweetness,—that I may henceforth know *Thee* in myself. For it is of Thy Grace that I am out of sympathy with myself, and in sympathy with Thee. Wilt Thou not make, organize, and inspirit my eternal nature, not according to my old sympathies, but

according to my new sympathy with Thee? I know Thou wilt, for this new sympathy is Thy gift:—it is the word of Thy promise inspoken, and living in my deepest life.

I have read somewhere, either this, or something much like it:—There was once a most wonderful and blessed Tree, altogether a tree of Renown, made to spring up in this world, by the Power of God. It was truly *in* nature, but not from nature. It was full of the sweet virtues of God; and being in nature, it was of unspeakable service, as a very medium of life, to all sick and sad hearts. The leaves of this Tree would heal all nations, and all creatures, of whatsoever disease they had, and its fruit, which it brought forth, not once in the year, but every month in the year, and that abundantly and of all kinds, was, beyond all price, precious, filling the soul with exceeding joyfulness. But when all sorts of people came to this Divine, Blessed Tree, instead of thankfully using its leaves for healing, and its fruits for satisfaction, they soon fell into contention about the Tree, about its origin and root, about the right means of getting its leaves and fruit, about the principles

of the same, and their mode of operation.—Insomuch that they fought and divided under this very Blessed Tree, and so this Unspeakable Gift of God, designed by Him to gather together in unity, all mankind, was turned, through their perverseness, into an occasion of strife and division. The Law of Love was in the Tree, but the "root of bitterness" was *in them.* It is still the Tree of Life to every creature, and waits till all shall agree to derive healing from its leaves, and delight from its fruit, without wrangling, either about the method of apprehending its virtues, or about the terms, expressing the same.

WOULD it not be very strange, if one limb of the body should have prejudices against another limb? And still more strange, if a poor dislocated limb should attribute its uneasiness to the body? and, instead of seeking to be brought again into harmony with the body, should determine to be a law to itself? Whence then come prejudices in the Body of Christ, of limb against limb, organ against organ? Fie upon thee, O limb! What! and thou criest, 'O, but the trunk is so corrupt, I must cut myself off from it, and set myself up in its stead.' Set *thyself* up in its stead, and be

a monster-limb wilt thou? without proportions, without beauty, without rest? having thine own feverish excitability, instead of the dignity and quietude of simplicity? having a vast amount of conscientious selfness, but *not* the humility and charity to prefer thine own self-subjection, for the Body's sake? Poor conceited *limb!* In due time thou wilt break up, and go to chaos. Corrupt as the trunk is, *it is the trunk for all that.* Moreover, the vitals are there. The heart is there, the lungs are there, the motherly bowels are there. Silly limb, if thou art too proud to acknowledge the trunk, the trunk produced *thee.* I wish thou couldst see that there are evils quite as corrupt as the corruption of the motherly trunk, of which thou speakest, namely, thine own hardness, and confidence of superior purity. Thou endeavourest to keep the singularity of thine own spirit in an attitude of defiance. The endeavouring which the Holy Ghost commends to thee is quite in another direction: "I beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called with all lowliness and meekness, &c., *endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace.*"

"CHRISTIANS that desire to be known by the undue prominence of some single feature of Christianity, are necessarily imperfect just in proportion to the distinctness of their peculiarities. The power of Christian truth is in its unity and symmetry, and not in the saliency or brilliancy of any special sacrament, doctrine, or form." There is an absolutely essential sacrament;—but it is *Christ*. There is an absolutely essential doctrine; it is *Christ in us*. And there is an absolutely essential form:—which is, "the Life of Jesus made manifest in our mortal flesh."

IF, what Mr. Ruskin calls, "the restoration of the innocence of the eye," is of the first importance to the Artist, how much more essential it must be to the student in Theology, to set his mind free from the slavish repetition of its own past experience. Should it not be his constant aim to divest himself of every film and prejudice, if by any means, he may attain to the absolute simplicity of the understanding? "If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light."

TAKE heed that you despise not God. In Himself, He cannot be despised, nor in the Glorified Form of His Son. But it is according to His Will to be always in the world, in a form which can be despised. He was despised of Cain, in Abel. He was despised in His prophets. He was despised, set at nought, in His Son. John said: "There standeth One among you Whose shoes latchet I am not worthy to unloose." Others saw nothing there, and in due time, their unbelief hesitated not to cry: "Crucify Him! Crucify Him." There is ever One standing among us, Whom we shall surely not esteem, unless we see with divine eyes, and judge with divine judgment. God is truly in His Church, in His poor, imperfect earthly Church. Just because He is amongst us *in men* of like passions with ourselves, therefore, "He is despised and rejected of men." More or less, all men are subject to the Jewish infatuation, of not knowing Him, *in His Humiliation.* A really self-renouncing man, a man of an humble and contrite heart, is strictly the House of God. Christ is present in the least of all His disciples. "Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones." A little one, that truly believes in Christ, is of great price before God. See Matt. xviii. 6. Know you not, that the least in the kingdom of Heaven, is greater than the

greatest of those who are born of women? Whether you know it, or not, *God is in that place.* For a little while He is *hidden* there, but again a little while, and you shall see His glory breaking forth from those very creatures, who may be in your eyes, "of no reputation," and "without form or comeliness."

WHEN thou bringest the vessel of thy mind, to any creaturely fountain, take heed that thou bring God in it, and thou shalt derive more from the fountain than it contains. No book is prose when God is the reader.

SOUND-MINDEDNESS.

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MAN is the *last* work of God. He is the *fullest* work of God too. His nature unites extremes. He ought to shew us in himself the exact balance, of the opposite poles of being; but he has lost the balance. The left hand extreme has made a prey of him. He has forsaken Holiness, therefore integrity of nature has forsaken him. He has abandoned the right beautiful for the false beautiful, which is the base, and he is become base. He is fallen away from God. He has lost his lustre, namely, the glory of God. The most fine gold, which was "as it were transparent glass," is become dim. Man has become dim. The lamp of God, which shone through and through the temple of his nature, has gone out.—"*Ichabod!*" He is a ruin. He is in *danger* of becoming a yet greater ruin. He is *capable* of more than angelic perfection. It behoves this king-creature to look well to himself. His nature is too great a thing, too deep, too venerable, too awful, to be made

light of. If he deal not wisely with himself, he will avenge himself on himself some day. Sin and judgment, culprit and judge, are in him. Has he not already felt symptoms of indignation and vengeance stirring in his soul? If he yield himself to a shallow, unworthy life, the time will surely come when they will awake, and not spare him.

Let him bestir himself. Let him ask it from God, that his mind may not be subject to the false god,—that he may not plead for what he ought to resist. Let him ask God that he may come to the knowledge of himself, and thus into sympathy with the redemption of his nature in Christ Jesus.

II.—Sound-mindedness is the understanding, delivered from its prejudices and fallacies, and become *the organ of Truth.* This is the end whereunto we must labor, with patience and perseverance; but we shall not presently reach it. It is not the attainment of a day. An earnest man will not be discouraged. If he fail to-day, he will begin again to-morrow. If he make but little progress, he will persevere. He will neither trifle, nor will he be impatient with himself. Did it not cost the Lord Himself, a conflict of unknown bitterness, to become his Restorer? and shall he expect to be restored

suddenly, or with slight pains? Let us settle it in our hearts, that during our mortal life-time we can only approximate towards it.

> "Begin to-day, nor end *till evil sink*
> *In its own grave;* and if at once we may not
> Attain the greatness of the work we plan,
> Be sure at least that ever in our mind
> It stand complete before us, as a dome
> Of Light beyond this gloom, a House of Stars
> Encompassing these dusky tents; a thing
> Absolute, close to all, though seldom seen,
> Near as our Hearts, and perfect as the Heavens.
> Be this our aim and model, and our Hands
> Shall not wax faint until the work is done."

Absolute Truth is the light of eternity, not of time. It is the knowledge of the whole, but here we only know in part. Let us not take our section for the whole circle. Let us be thankful that there are great gaps in our knowledge, open places, waiting to be filled up with God's Truth, in His own time. Beware of partialities! partialities make partial men; and partial men stand still in their beloved monotony. They abhor change, and therefore they grow not. Growth is change. Plants grown in the same soil, year after year, are impoverished thereby. So minds, set and fixed in their little

systems of knowledge, lose their energy and freshness. Suppose a few families, proud of their blood and contour, should persist, generation after generation, in marrying only their own kindred, what a wretched species of humanity would be sent into the world! Souls likewise, who carefully revolve within their small circuit, and eschew every thing beyond, become sick and pusillanimous, whining their everlasting monotone, and moaning that their insipidities do not become universal. Breadth is very essential to sound-mindedness. Learn to marry extremes in your own mind. Divorced, they are untrue. Each needs the other. Truth is unitive. The soul of truth, therefore, is charity. "God is Love;" and Truth is the brightness of His glory. "I am the Truth," said His Only Begotten Son. Add to your own things the things of others. Especially, do not think to comprehend the Christian religion, with the few saints of your own community, but "with *all* saints." Otherwise, there will be but a miserable reflection of its height and depth, length and breadth, in your understanding.

III.—Sound-mindedness is by no means tame-mindedness. This is far enough from being a tame universe. And from Genesis to Revelation, there

is no tameness in the Bible. Heaven is the holy world, but, from what we hear of it, any thing but monotonous, or dull. To be in sympathy with God's works and ways, you must think spiritedly. Let your earnestness carry rather a bright than a demure face. Let hope prevail. God lives. Ask for much; for He delights in giving. Expect more than you ask, yea, more than you can imagine. The riches of God are unsearchable. But be not always earnest, or you will never be earnest. I mean your earnestness will be solemn, feigned, mechanical, and not *genuine*. You are a creature, you must relax sometimes. Do you not put off your clothes, lie down, and go to sleep, that you may be able to work the better to-morrow? In like manner, lay aside your earnestness and intensity, that you may be more earnest and intense. Lie on the grass, be vacant, forget yourself. Rely upon it, you will come to yourself again, with increase. How vigorous the morning is, after the pause of a night! There are shrubs which will not flower well unless their roots lie some months under snow.

IV.—A sound-minded man will have respect to his whole nature, and to the claims of his whole nature. He will neither think nor live, like a

man without his body, but like a man in his body. He will not abide too long on Mount Tabor, nor cut himself off from himself, nor deny the claims which others have upon him. A deranged mind despises the flesh, and seeks solely the sanctification of the spirit. A sound-minded man seeks the sanctification of his *body, soul,* and spirit. A morbid craving for spiritual indulgence he will not tolerate. Why should he live upon confections? Fleshly lusts are to be eschewed, and not less, the lusts of the spirit. Not only "the flesh lusteth against the spirit," but also, "*the spirit against the flesh.*" "The spirits of the prophets are *subject to the prophets:*"—if they are not, the prophets are at fault. There is a golden mean of temperance; and the sound-minded man wishes to walk therein, that he may neither be the prey of flesh nor spirit. He will do nothing to hasten his dissolution: he will abide his full time in the flesh. He will think with awe of his spiritual nature,—of his responsibility to God, and of his eternal destiny. But he will not play the tyrant towards his inferior nature. A sound-minded man will not labor much for that which is not worth much; nor wholly withhold his service where only a little is due. On truly great subjects, he will think much, and on trivial subjects, less. If he find

himself thinking warmly towards what he ought to be indifferent, he will rebuke his warmth. If he find his affections cold, or lukewarm, where they ought to be intense, he will give himself no rest under this criminal perverseness of his spirit. Better that derangement should happen to the solar system, than that it should continue in his soul. The solar system will not last so long as his soul. Derangement there, would not be *sin.* In his soul, it is *sin.*

V.—If a man has but the germ of sound-mindedness, he will abhor the idea of being his own master. He is the creature of God. He must, in his heart and will, be *under Him.* This is the *first essential.* The man, who is not knowingly, intentionally, and heartily subject to God, is violating the first law of his being. Sound thinking is an impossibility to him. His soul is off its hinges. His mind is askew with respect to all the laws of God. To all that absolutely *is,* he is adverse; and therefore God, and all the purposes of God, are adverse to Him. Neither God, nor His purposes, *can* change: His creature therefore *must* change, or perish.

He must allow God to be God, and to be God *over him.* If God finds fault with the condition of

his being, he must accept God's judgment, and not perversely set up his judgment against God. He must do and become, what God requires him to do and become. If God requires him to undergo a radical change in his underlying nature, he must acquiesce. If this change cannot be effected against his will, but only in co-operation with his will, then he must not withhold his sympathies. It is the will of God that he should be a new creature, but it must be his own will also, or he will never be a new creature. If he demur about what is fundamental to soundness of mind, then he will inherit the penalty, in his own imbecile, one-sided mind, and think unjustly about every divine and human subject. He will never think *truth*. He will think *un*truth for truth. In insubordination to God, he cannot think truth. God is Truth. Let him first submit to God; and after that, it will be possible to him, by little and little, to think soundly, that is, to think truth. The eye, with its lid open, must be first plunged into light, before it can see light. So likewise must man come to God and immerse his mind, with great desire, into the element of His Truth, or he will never know truth. Truth is the Light of God's countenance; the apprehension of which belongs exclusively to those who walk therein. Can any creature, in this

universe, who does not meekly submit his mind to God, have a *right* mind? Impossible. He can only have an utterly *wrong* mind. And how can a wrong mind think rightly?

VI.—Farther, if it be not a man's sober, settled conviction, that his soul *really wants the application of God's remedy*, all his light will be gross darkness. Actions are louder than words. The man, therefore, who does not receive into his heart the Gospel of God, reproves God for His interposition,—tells Him, that there was no need of His remedy. He is "wise in his own conceits." His wisdom is not wisdom, but self-flattery. There is a film over his eye, and he puts from him the gracious hand of the Rectifier. This man can see nothing aright. His spiritual nature is in the greatest disorder, but he proclaims his own soundness, and refuses to be meddled with. God says to him: 'You want help, and I have brought nigh My Help in My Dear Son, by Whom also I made the worlds.' He replies, 'I can do without *that Help*.' Can this perverse creature be sound-minded? or, ever come to sound-mindedness? Never; unless he repent of his perverseness and believe the Gospel. The winds and the waves,—all the influences of nature and the tendencies of

his own nature,—are carrying his vessel on the fearful rocks. The Lord and Master of all influences and tendencies proposes to come on board, and conduct his vessel in safety to the right port; but no, he will not have *Christ* on board. This man may call himself his own captain, and console himself with the delusion of superior ability; but he is a poor insane no-captain. Instead of allowing "the Wisdom of God" to steer his vessel, he suffers the devil, under the form of self-will, to steer it whithersoever he will. He allows his own feelings and wishes to govern him, sometimes his reason, and sometimes his passion; he bows to custom, and to the opinions of his fellow creatures; but of bowing to God, and being under law to Christ, he will not hear. He is holden by the chains of his own darkness, but he calls his darkness, light, and his chains, liberty. Behold, the melancholy picture, and take warning! For so it is with the creature, who, in the perverseness of his will, says of the Lord's Christ, "I will not have this Man to reign over me,"—I will reign over myself. Blind, degenerate spirit! whither is thy self-will tending? Certainly not to Heaven; Christ reigns there. It is tending Hell-wards, it will carry thee thither. You will see self-rule enough there, and be sufficiently filled with its ways.

VII.—Whether you acknowledge Him, or not, there is a Divine Head of the human race. He, of God, is made unto mankind, both Wisdom and Holiness. His Wisdom is their sound-mindedness, and His Holiness, their right-heartedness. You must consent to *receive* both from Him, or be a poor miserable human botch for ever. "*Sitting at the feet of Jesus,*" is the condition of sound-mindedness. "They found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and *in his right mind.*" A calm power, meek wisdom, and divine nobility, find and possess those who sit there. The whole right-minded universe is meekly sitting at the feet of Jesus, learning of Him. He is the Word of God, and the all of Wisdom is from Him. Did you not receive your being from creatures like yourself, who were corrupt in body and soul? and are you too proud to receive your being *anew from God?* Are you too proud to humble yourself at the feet of His Christ? Take heed, a haughty spirit in a fallen creature, precedes a yet more dismal fall. "Before Honor is Humility."

BLOOD-RELATIVES.

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THERE is something deep and past finding out in a blood-relation. Corrupt as natural blood is, and full of an energy, *from* sin, and *unto* sin, it is nevertheless a wonderful bond. Your own brother! your own sister! your own father! your own mother! your own child! how much more there is in such relations than can be spoken, or apprehended! Make your thought thereof live and burn in song, and set your song to soul-moving music, there still abides something in the bond of *one blood*, unsaid, and unsung,—yea, something deeper than your own deepest feeling. Blood-relatives make no vows to each other, enter into no legal contract, often, do not treat each other daintily, nay, roughly rather; but there is a bond between them a thousandfold stronger, than all the legal compacts that were ever made, than all the passionate vows that were ever uttered. All legal compacts, however warmly, or solemnly entered into, imply, that perhaps after all there is

no absolute relation between the parties. In what an off-hand kind of manner the winds treat the earth, yet a very sure covenant abides between them. The earth, strange bride as she is, seven times in the week, turns her back completely upon her bridegroom, as though she would put an end to the connection. Meanwhile, the bridegroom does nothing but wait, and in due time, bride and bridegroom are found very faithfully embracing and being embraced. Where there *is* a relation, the parties rely upon its faithfulness under all contradictions. 'I am going to leave you,' said Light to Heat, 'I am tired of bondage, I want to be free, that I may roam far and wide.' 'Go, by all means,' said Heat, 'I will even *send you* with my blessing.' And sure enough Light is always leaving, but she has never left. There is even a divine carelessness, which is the sign of a divine bond. The chains of God are a play of liberty. Hence blood-relations, knowing that there *is* a bond between them, that they have a right in each other, and that they are members one of another, say, with the most unaffected simplicity to one of themselves: 'Never mind *us*, go and attend to the strangers.' That is, *We* can forego attention, reality may be left to itself for awhile. Flowers without roots quickly die; but if you have

roots, you can wait with patience for future flowers. If even the relation be denied, and one blood-relative should treat another with harshness and indifference, it is still felt that the bond abides; and, in spite of the most violent disruption, each continues to feel a deep interest in the other.

Beautiful, mysterious bond!—if you have not been in the house of your brother, or sister, or any close blood-relative, these twenty years, you have a peculiar feeling on entering, as though you had been all these years divided from an essential part of yourself. Your flesh, your blood, your nerves, your very bones feel that they are treading on familiar ground. You may have been as good as buried to each other all these years. It matters not: your whole nature quivers with interest. The relation is even a greater thing to your nature, than to your understanding. Your nature has never revealed to your understanding how the whole matter stands with blood-relatives. You may not say many words, nor appear intensely interested in each other, but your natures commune together, by hidden and unspeakable affinities. The intimacy is like that of your own soul and body. Mutely, but unhesitatingly, they claim each other, and yet they are strange one to another.

II.—True, the relationship in natural blood is not absolutely divine; but it is the shadow of the divine. And under the cloud of degenerate nature, as under some strange thing, there beats a fond pulse of languishing desire *that it may become divine.* Yes, and the beautiful, natural thing, is capable of becoming a beautiful, divine thing. Tender blood-relatives would give to their relation the strength of the Divine Nature, the beauty of Heaven, and the lastingness of Eternity, if they could. Let them be comforted, that their utmost desires can be fulfilled. Our deepest and most sacred desires are the hand-writing of God. He prompts us to desire that which He delights to do. The purposes of God beget corresponding sympathies in our souls. Our silent, indistinct longings, are these sympathies. We may regard our inmost yearnings, therefore, which are even too fond for utterance, as the Divine promises kindling in our affections. Truly, God is not far from the natural blood-relation. He is waiting to be called upon to enter into it; for He is able, and more than willing, to transmute it into the Eternal Blood-relation. The families that make most of their natural relationship, who find quiet heart-rest together, and who abound in mutual attentions and loving services, may do so

in the utter absence of high motives, not even thinking of spiritual and eternal relationship; and yet they are really preparing the way for the descent of God and heaven into their family bonds. Remember, that as the Lord was once made flesh, so is He ever present in nature's bonds, prompting the tender affection to express itself in all manner of delicate acts, that in due time, He may turn these graces of the earth into heavenly things. It is His order, that the lilies of eternity should strike root in nature's soil, and breathe their first fragrance in time. "First, that which is natural; and afterwards, that which is spiritual." Gracious families should thank the Lord, not only that they are *families*, but for their gracious affections, and beseech Him to deepen, hallow and eternalize their relationship, by pouring into it His Spirit. He is the Source of all grace, both natural, and divine. He knows that His creatures cannot change the one into the other. But what they cannot do, He will do for them, at their desire; and the vessels which heretofore contained only water, shall be filled with the ever-living water, from "the river of His pleasures." Parents and children, brothers and sisters, who first lovingly fulfil their natural blood-relation, and who afterward seek that their tender, mysterious relation should become, through the Blood of Christ, a thrice

sacred, Divine relation, will find themselves in the eternal world intensely related, in a wondrous complexity of blessed bonds.

III.—A spiritual relationship is never so close and so strong, as when the persons are related also by *strong, natural sympathies.* But there are other natural kindred than those who are so called. Nature's similars are not always born of the same father and mother. All similars are strongly attached. They do not make their relation. It was made without them. They no sooner meet than they are captivated by the "pre-established harmony." Now and then, it has happened that this harmony has been so strangely complete, that each has loved the other, literally, as his own soul, and felt indeed as though there were but one soul between them. The fact is that the One Spirit enters into and affects similar natures so similarly, that when either speaks out of his deepest life, he equally speaks the experience of the other. When these similars by nature are apprehended by the Second Adam, and the sweet life of eternity springs up in their hearts, the relation becomes one of unutterable endearment. They are double and redoubled similars. They were comprehended in a marvellous unity before their new-birth, and on

that very account, the successive steps in their regenerate life, are a strictly similar series. Every step of their spiritual progress, therefore, relates them more and more essentially. When the eternal unity descends into natural unity, how strong is that unity! God Himself has established the bond between them, and that bond is rooted and grounded in the eternity of their new nature, in Christ.

IV.—If you have received Life to life, namely, the Life of the Lord Jesus into your life, you are not only permitted, but under Divine obligation, to seek *first of all the salvation of your kindred according to the flesh.* Divine Love converts natural love into a very tender, Christ-like solicitude. Is not the salvation of those who are akin to you, as essential to the Divine glory as your own salvation? How can you be complete without *them?* How can your joyfulness in eternity be full, if they are absent? If you have found a little heaven on earth, with those who have strong natural affinities with you, what a heaven in Heaven will you not enjoy with them, when your affinities are become celestial and intensified with the Eternal Life! Compared with your relation to all other creatures, will there not

be something peculiar in your mutual attractions? Most openly and unreservedly you will give yourselves and all your powers to all, and yet, one with another, you will find a unity which you can no more unmake than make. You cannot impart it to others, nor can others enter into the same with you. In proportion as you are *connaturalized*, must remain for ever and ever, the peculiarity of your *consociation*.

"He *first* findeth *his own brother*." He brought *him* to Jesus. Have *you* found Jesus? Then you have found in Him the true Pearl of your being. You have found that by which your whole threefold nature, body, soul, and spirit, shall be transmuted and made a new substance, a glorious substance. You have found "the Hope of glory,"—both of your own personal glory, and your share in the Glory of God, and of His Kingdom. You have found the open gate to the perfection of your nature. You have a title to Heaven, and the Key to all the resources of the Divine Nature.

You have an own brother, an own sister, or some other blood-relative, or dearest friend, to whom you have often felt your whole nature strangely drawn, almost as though your two souls were one divided, or as though each found in the other, the centre of rest for the opposite poles

of his own nature. Let Andrew by all means first touch the heart of *his own brother* Simon, with his newly found life. Let David not fail to convert the bond of sympathy between him and his beloved Jonathan, into a Divine sympathy. Otherwise, he will perish some day by the hands of the Philistines on the mountains of Gilboa. Then many tears will not heal his heart-wounds. "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been to me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women."

Yes, your first duty is the delightful duty, of making your dear fellow heart a partaker of your golden Hope. You must not rest till your kinsman, or kinswoman, shall know what you know, and feel what you feel,—till you rejoice together in the same immortal prospect. The affection that is common to you both, as kindred children of nature, is a mighty power, a mighty charm. You must use this secret, powerful enchantment, to draw this eternal heart to Jesus. He is become to you your deepest life, your ever-springing life, your all satisfying life, is He not? You must surely bring your own brother, your own sister, your own closest bosom-friend *to Him.* This precious one must be one with your deepest life, and one with you in your endless Home. Love will neither

doubt nor be discouraged. If your words fail to move, then ply your love, without words. Love is "mighty *through God.*" Even natural love has invisible arrows: how much more, the love of God! It is given to you to pierce the heart of your friend with *Divine arrows.* Remember, arrows wound at a distance; but what arrows can triumph over seas, mountains, and deserts, but the arrows of Jesus' Love, shot forth, in prayer and tender desire, from soul to soul. "Lord, speak the word only." Art not Thou in my faith and love? And wilt Thou do less than my faith and love look and long for?

1.—"He brought him to Jesus." From that hour the life of their precious, inseparable unity, began.

2.—O sorrow of sorrows! It is easier to find Hearts, who would bring others to Jesus, than to find Hearts, willing to be brought. What can Love do, but weep over unwilling Hearts? But weeping Love becometh deeper, tenderer love, and the deeper and tenderer the Love, the more potent it becomes. In ways utterly unknown to them, sorrow-stricken and slain Hearts, with their sighing, prayer-breathing love-wounds impregnate, and greatly affect other hearts.

DIVINE GENERATION.

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"THE generations of the earth," to say nothing of "the generations of the heavens," are too vast a field to be scanned by the creature. But we need not wholly turn away from what we cannot comprehend. For then we must needs turn away from every thing. There is one satisfaction: the soul is a deeper, greater thing, than language. The writer never expresses his whole soul in his words; neither are the reader's thoughts necessarily limited to the sense of what he reads. Language fulfils a purpose beyond itself. The writer may have no conception of the thoughts which his words will awaken in certain readers. The use of words to the soul is as the use of light to the eye. Light in the eye becomes much more than light. It becomes vision. *What* the eye sees, depends not on the light alone, but on the powers, and whereabouts, of the eye. The best eye, in a confined situation, sees little; an inferior eye, out in the open plain, sees more, on the top of a commanding hill, much

more. But one eye that looks *upward*, sees a great deal more than all the eyes in the world, that look downward.

So with words: what they are to you, depends upon what you are to them. What are the powers of your soul? How far are these powers quickened? Is your soul in captivity? or, is it brought out into a large place? Are you in the plain? or, are you going up the hill? above all, are you looking upward, or downward? is the spirit of your life natural, or supernatural? Words may be used in a sublime sense, but they will not convey a sublime sense to ignoble souls. Words may be used spiritually, but they will be understood carnally, by a carnal mind. Before your Pentecost, you can only bring a dull soul to Divine words, and your dull soul, earth-born and earth-bound, will find them to be dull words. After your Pentecost, the same words will be spirit and life to you. A word, a hint, a half hint, will open more to one soul, than a half century's instruction to another.

I.—*Generation in nature, is a universal effect, from a universal, latent energy.* Vegetable seeds and roots are prolific: fish, birds, and creeping things are prolific. All things bring forth

their own kind from an energy operating in them towards this end. The generative powers at work throughout creation, must have a Fontal *Source*. Where,—what,—is the Spring-Head of this all-pervading energy? The effort towards reproduction is not only present throughout the material universe, but clearly also throughout the spiritual. Who can doubt that Heaven striveth to bring forth an image of itself in the earth? Who can look upon the marvellous effects of spring-time, as the generations of the sun by the earth? and not rather as witnesses of the coming forth of a universal energy from Heaven, namely, from the spirit and power of God in Heaven? by which He brings forth, under the crude elements of nature, the best and loveliest representation possible, of that higher world of life and beauty. If the subject-matter were of a more heavenly sort, the manifestations would be more heavenly. But crude as the earthly material is, see the hedges and woods bud and leaf,—see the fruit trees blossom,—hear the song-birds giving utterance to their new life and delight,—let the genial spirit of the atmosphere embrace and inspire you, and say, whether Heaven is not in the effort to bring itself forth in a physical form? "Canst thou restrain the sweet influences of Pleiades?" Is there not present

throughout all elements, all fields and woods, plants and creatures, a loving and love-generating sea of life? Is it not as though all the virtues of Heaven said, 'Come, let us embody ourselves in the earth: let us rejoice together before the eyes of the children of men, that they also may rejoice with us?' When in the hour of inspiration the divine poet speaks of the hills rejoicing on every side, of the valleys shouting and singing, of the gladness of the field, and all that is therein, of the rejoicing of all the trees of the wood before the Lord, we may be quite sure that His words have a *sincere*, as well as a beautiful sense.

II.—These powers and pleasures of Heaven come as soon as they can come: that is, as soon as the sun and the earth, by their mutual relation, present the necessary conditions. And as soon as *we* come out of our wintry state of alienation from God, into direct relationship with Him, through His Son, does not Heaven generate its own holy thoughts and feelings in us? are not its purity and peace, its love and joy, brought forth in our hearts? Earthly fire ascends; but the Love, which is the fire of God and of Heaven, *descends*. It is the delight of Heaven *to come down* into the elements, into the earth, into bird and fish, beast and creeping thing:

how much more into human souls! "Heaven is all Love." And Love is neither impatient nor doubtful. It will prevail at last. As the virgin brought forth the Son of God, so, from long, long travailing mother-earth, will Heaven bring itself forth some day. And the lovely child shall eclipse the mother. For earth shall be hidden in the bosom of Heaven, as now Heaven is, in the earth. The whole creation, visible and invisible, is laboring to bring forth something beyond, something nobler than itself. Whence is this universal spirit of generation?—"Our Father, Which art in Heaven," is the only answer. From Him all paternity derives its power. Mineral, vegetable, and animal, each after its kind, and man and angel, after their kind, are energized with His energy. If the universe were not *in* Him, as well as *of Him*, it would be without effect, or progeny. For if it were cut off from the Eternal Generator, its generative power would at once cease. Secondary causes, divided from their Initial Cause, would be no longer causes. O, all ye Heavens and ye earths and elements, apart from the First Power, "ye can do nothing." God is "all and in all," in His own Creation. So is He likewise the Prototype of its great generative law. What is the Eternal Generation of God's Only Son, but the Oneness from eternity of Cause

and Effect? Father and Son are One God. Here we have the very Fountain-Head of generation. The Son of God is the lustre, glory and energy of all the powers of the Father. But the lustre, glory and energy of these powers are inseparable from the powers themselves. We must not suppose, that the Father was ever without the Son, for the outshining virtue of all the powers in the Father, like the powers themselves, is Eternal.

III.—The Son being pregnant with the energy of all the powers of the Father, was but the Divine *Beginning*, in order to universal creaturely generation. "God, clothed with Light as with a garment," is both the First Effect, and Efficient, towards an endless series of effects. The whole universe is like a series of garments, throughout which, the virtues of the Eternal Father, through His Son, ray forth and operate. The lower and lowest heavens are lower and lowest, for no other reason than that the Divine glory and virtue flow less freely into them. In the earth, this glorious virtue is *occultly* present, permeating the veil, and patiently laboring to break through. And as it becomes more and more incorporated in holy souls, and, by them, more and more drawn into the earth, so also that *great day* must hasten, when

the elements will melt with fervent heat, and when the earth and all that is therein, shall be burned up; which, as it seems to us, are inevitable consequences of the descent of the Divine powers of Heaven, into the sphere of nature. The kingdom of God, coming into nature, will subdue all things to itself. The powers of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and the same powers in the Heavens, will have no rest till it is fulfilled.

For this purpose, the Son of God took flesh and glorified it, that He might more freely and "more abundantly," transmit these holy powers into the earth. And for this end is the Gospel preached, to bring human hearts to Christ, that through Him they may receive anew the Spirit "Which proceedeth from the Father;" and Which generates a new creature, to supplant and take the place of that prior generation, which being not strictly from God, is not according to God.

IV.—*The term FATHER, therefore, with absolute propriety, only belongs to God.* It is by no means a title transferred from the creature to Him; but wholly derived from Him, and conferred on the creature. God gives to His fallen creation, and His fallen creatures, the power to bring forth; but there is a wide difference between

what *they* bring forth, and what *He* brings forth. His creatures bring forth *their own kind:* God brings forth *His Own Kind.* That is, self-activity impresses its own image upon its offspring; but the activity of God, operating through completely subject natures, generates the Divine image.

The power of the Holy Ghost, given through Jesus Christ our Lord, introduced into the creature, sets him free from the qualities and limits of his first nature, and gives him a life, strictly from God and in God. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become *the sons of God:* which were born, *not* of blood, *nor* of the will of the flesh, *nor* of the will of man, but OF GOD." "Shall not I, that make others to bring forth children, Myself bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I Who give generation to others be barren Myself? saith thy God." Isa. lxvi. 9. Luther's version.

Saith the Lord, "Call no man your father upon the earth, for One is your Father, Which is in heaven." *That nature,* in virtue of which we are the children of God, is *not* of creaturely derivation. Nor can we with any truth call God "our Father," until we are "born of Him." "You are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Gal. iii. 26. For faith, by a living connection with Him, derives *His Life.* "I live, yet *not I,*

but *Christ liveth in me.*" "The Spirit," not in relation to our first, but our second birth, "beareth witness with our spirit, that we are *the children of God.*" Rom. viii. 16. "They who are the children of the flesh, these are *not the children of God.*" Rom. ix. 8. The children of God both know, and love God, from that new nature, which is in them from Him. And God loves *them*, as He loves His Own Son, for as He sees Himself in His Son, even so also He sees His Son in them.

V.—Throughout the whole of God's House and family, *the Same Eternal Affinities prevail.* These Affinities, which have their Source in the Eternal Father, and their First absolutely harmonious manifestation in His Son, Who is "the Firstborn among many brethren," dwell in all His angel-children, and in all the spirits of just men made perfect. Nor in these alone, but also in all the tribes and tongues and kindreds of His family on earth. The relations subsisting throughout the Divine family, between heaven and heaven, mansion and mansion, angel and angel, man and man, are essentially Divine, being constituted by the Eternal Affinities, which are in them from One Father. "To us there is but One God the Father, of Whom are all things, and we in Him; and

One Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we by Him." 1 Cor. viii. 6. "There is One Body and One Spirit," "One Lord, one (living) Faith, one (living) Baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all and in you all."* Eph. iv. 4—6.

The Divine family includes every possible *variety*, for it is the embodiment and flowering forth of all the virtues and affections of Godhead. Yet, is the family perfectly one, for all the variety, comprehended in the Divine Nature, is a perfect unity. Every variety in the family enjoys the utmost freedom; for its endless distinctions are the distinctions of an infinite accord. The whole paternity in Heaven and earth is rightly named from One Name, for it is natured according to that One Nature. As no child wishes his mother to be father, nor his father to be mother; and as the brother has no wish that his sister should be a brother, nor does the sister wish her brother to be any thing but a brother: so also in the family of God, no one wishes to alter another, for every one sees in every other a manifestation of the variety

* I have inserted the word *living* before Faith and Baptism as distinctive of the "One Faith" and "One Baptism," from the divers *outer* faiths and baptisms, on which men divide and strive. But both vital faith in Christ, and spiritual baptism into Christ are absolutely one, as God is One.

in God. Every thing that is from God, is sacred and beautiful to every one who is born of God. For as every thing in God is in affinity with every thing in God: so every child of God, and every peculiarity of every child, is in affinity with every other. "Every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him."

VI.—The ties of the children of God, are no other than the *ties of God.* No words can express the closeness of these ties, for their closeness is a closeness that belongs to the Divine Affinities. Nor can these ties be broken, for they are of God, and moreover, *God is in them.*

The unity of the Divine family is thus made inviolable. There have been ancient breaches in it;—one, in the spirit-population of eternity, and the other, in the kingdoms of sense; but the omnipotent unity of God and man, in one Christ, is a guarantee to the whole family that its oneness shall be violated no more. The rupture originated in the youth, weakness and inexperience of the family. It is being brought to a close, under that New Head, Who is Himself the Type of the eternal, future unity of the "household of God." The Eternal Father is making His whole family, in heaven and earth, out of the Divine Blood, that it

may be constituted in the strength and the eternity of His own nature, as it is humanized in His Son, our Lord.

Were the sun to break up, the beams, which in unity make daylight, becoming stray and isolated, might lose their splendour; but so long as the sun endures, the unity and energy of his beams, will abide unimpaired. If "our Rock," Which is God and man made One, could be dissolved, then indeed every human interest would perish, and hope itself expire. But if no power can prevail against "our Rock," then, world without end, the whole Divine family, which God has built upon this Rock, will grow unto a closer, dearer unity. For remember, that "*our Rock*" is the most fluent life; and in no other sense a Rock, than as being the immutable foundation of God's new heavens and new earth, which, like their foundation, are never to pass away. As there is already perfected and established an equilibrated accord between God and the Man, Christ Jesus, it is the will of God that the same should be brought about between His Son and redeemed mankind, that His New Creation, strong in His Power, and glorious in His Beauty, may continue before Him for ever. To the same effect, the Apostle speaks;—That the whole body, namely, of the Church, being

rooted and grounded in all the fulness of God in Christ, and being fitly framed together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth, will evermore be built up with new increments of Divine Love, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part.

VII.—These two words, "Our Father," involve all our Hope, and more than we can hope. Because He is "our *Father*," He is bound to us by the Strength and Love, and even the Eternity of His own nature; and we likewise are bound to Him by the strength and love of our whole being. And since we say, not *my*, but "*our* Father," we confess that we are essentially one with all those to whom He is Father. One nature, like an indivisible bond, unites and comprehends us all. *My*, is included in our; but "*our*" expresses the exceeding wealth and unity of our inheritance. Every member of the family loves his whole family, and himself as a member of it. The family is essential to him, and he to the family. In himself he would be poor indeed; but as one of such a family, there are no limits to his possessions, no bounds to his joy. Just because the riches of Christ are unsearchable, the Heritage of His family is unspeakable. What, but their incapacity to

receive, can hinder an Almighty God from giving far greater and more wondrous things to His children, than, at present even Heaven knows any thing about?

VIII.—In a sacred, mysterious sense, by faith in Christ Jesus, the soul becomes the *child* of God, and the *mother* of Jesus. The Lord spoke no meaningless word, when pointing to His disciples, He said: "Behold, *My mother!*" The nature of God's Dear Son is brought forth in every one, whom a living faith has joined to Him. To be personally accepted in the Beloved, the Beloved must be begotten in us. Christ, conceived of the Holy Ghost, in the inmost virgin affections, is the hope of glory to each soul. But that which is brought forth in the soul, by the power of the Holy Ghost, is absolutely one with the Son of God, and therefore the Lord calls His true disciple, not only "My mother," but "*My brother.*" And this same new-born holy nature, being related to Him by most tender womanly affections, He calls also, "*My sister.*" In an ineffable manner, every soul, in whom He brings forth His own nature and image, is His mother, His brother, and His sister.

IX.—There is, there can be, but one sure, indis-

soluble bond between creature and creature, and that is *God*. If the great bond be wanting, all other bonds are vanity: not even in appearance will they last long. Every tie must dissolve and cease, save the one Essential Divine tie between the Eternal Father and His children. *They are a family.* Another family cannot be made. Every other relation is as though it were not. Every other is a world-dream. Widows, orphans, broken hearts, and a world of graves, bear witness to the *un*reality of every bond, except one, namely, that which makes us one with God, and with one another *in Him*. Out of this one Bond, all Heaven grows. If this Bond is lacking, Hell lurks in disguise under all the relations of flesh and blood. That which is not founded in God cannot cohere together: it is destitute of true being. All husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, who are at variance with God, will soon be at variance with each other.

The fulness of the Godhead bodily dwells in One Man, and through that One Man, in all who are His: these are brethren, God's family, members one of another, and beside these there is no family. You might as soon find another Living and True God, as find, or make another living and true family.

X.—As members of the Divine family, let

us look upon each other no longer as fellow mortals, buying and selling, toiling and striving, meeting and parting, marrying and dying, but *as fellow partakers of the Divine Nature.* Let us regard each other from our faith and hope, rather than from sight. Let the infirmities of our brethren and sisters, and all unloveliness, whether of temper or character, disappear from our eyes: let us look upon them as they are in Jesus, and as they will shortly be in themselves. Look forward a few years, and behold the meekness and sweetness of Christ settled in them, as their own eternal disposition. Behold the symmetry and beauty of their eternal forms, as they stand "*without fault* before the throne of God."

AIDS TO THOUGHT.

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THE loss of a quality from any substance induces *a change* in the substance. What a change must have been brought about in the creature, by the loss of the first, or absolute quality, namely, the Divine Glory!—bringing him at once down, from his relation to the infinite and eternal, under bondage to space and time.

Man's imprisonment within matter, and his consequent subjection to space and time, are conditions of *changed* being, deficient being; which conditions followed immediately upon the loss, or extinction of the Eternal Light,—God's Glory.

Regenerate souls, in whom the marvellous Light is again kindled, will find upon the loss of their earthy, darkened body, *a strange increase.* A cloud-wrapped star comes into universal relationship,—a vast inheritance,—by losing its cloud.

But when shall the whole creation be loosened from her bonds, and let go floating in the Light-ocean of God? When shall Nature be relieved

of her grave-clothes, and the napkin which is about her face, and shew once more her long-veiled Beauty?

Dear, loving, godly kindred,—long watching at the gates which divide the sensible from the super-sensible,—*watch on*, in meek patience; the night is still deep, but the Ancient Morning is very faithfully returning, and at the appointed hour *will be here!*

STRICTLY speaking, as yet, there is no universe. Heaven, earth and hell, are not even a triniverse, still less, a *uni*verse. Heaven and hell are contradictory and contending spheres. Heaven is the only harmonious sphere. Hell is rampant disharmony. The visible creation is a disharmonizing sphere, slowly *harmonizing*. Heaven is active good, Hell is active evil. In nature, these two actives embody themselves, and give evidence of their hostility. In their form, odour and taste, some things are Heaven-types; and some, Hell-types. Likewise the instincts and passions of the creatures, are, some, Heaven-types, and some, Hell-types.

For the same reason that faith in God and in a perfect world, is possible, unbelief, or spiritual darkness, is also possible. If the material creation

were an unmixed revelation of the Divine Nature, we should walk by sight, and not by faith.

IF great men are heralds of coming ages; are not the ways of God much more in advance of Heaven itself? But Heaven certainly will *follow* God whithersoever He goeth. God, in very deed, has dwelt with men on the earth:—Heaven, therefore, *must be expected.* As surely as we believe in the Incarnation, must we rely that the reign of God will come "on the earth, as it is in Heaven."

WHATEVER has the deepest place in our life, has also the chief dominion over us, and whatever has the chief dominion over us, is our *lord.* Memory, conviction, sentimentality, conscience, habit, &c., &c., may *call* Jesus, "Lord and Master;" while the actual spring and scope of our free life, may be quite in another direction. Let us not deceive ourselves. What we are when we are most free, *that we really are.*

SIN is war against God. It aims directly at the life of God. So far as it is possible, sin has once slain God, and that once, "from the foundation of the world." Sin is always the same in its character. "God, manifest in the flesh," wounded from head to feet, crucified, and dead, by His creatures, alone shews what sin is, in its essential nature and tendency.

But the view of Christ's death which is even more set forth in the New Testament, is, that it is *God's method of curing sin.* True, the sins of the whole world are convergent in the Cross of Christ; but the way in which God delights to speak of the death of His Son, is, that mercies and forgivenesses are gone forth through Him "for the sins of the whole world." "Through this Man," (Whom you "by wicked hands have crucified and slain,") "is preached unto you *the forgiveness of sins.*"

"THE BREAD OF LIFE."

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THE New Testament knows nothing about, so called, abstract Truth. It abhors abstractions, as *non*-entities. It treats of *things:* its terms therefore are always concrete. From beginning to end, the Religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is strictly *Substantive.* The end of which is *the organic development of the One Absolutely Living Substance, in the New Nature of believers.*

I.—As is the man, such must be his bread. "The first man is of the earth, earthy;" and must have earthy bread. The bread which cometh forth out of the earth, is full of earth, and for the earth: first, for the living earthy body, and finally for the dead earth once more, when the body relapses to its origin, "earth to earth." It is "the

bread that perisheth;" and all who live thereby perish. It is the bread of death, in distinction from "True Bread," Which is *Living* Bread.

II.—"The Bread of God" is as full of God, as the bread of the earth is full of earth. "The Bread of God" is *God our Bread.* As it is written, Man liveth by that which proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The world, and all things that are therein, subsist by the mediation of the sun. Grass, and herbs, and trees, and all creatures, live not by the earth alone, but chiefly by solar heat and light. The sun is essential bread to all nature; and is ever and ever coming down to give life unto the world.

III.—But immortal spirits want a very different Bread. Spirits want spirit-bread. If the fallen spirits of men are ever to become divine-natured spirits, they must not only eat spirit-bread, but Divine Spirit-Bread. "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. But "the Bread of God," "cometh down from Heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and *not die.*"

IV.—The Bread of God is the one only living

and true Substance. It is that Which is, and Which was, and Which always will be. Remember: "The Bread of God is *He* Which cometh down from Heaven," namely, "The Same Which was in the beginning with God, and was God." We are distinctly taught then, that the Lord, when insisting on the necessity of our eating His flesh, alludes not to His natural flesh. His natural flesh did not come down from Heaven, but was taken from the Virgin's womb. The flesh, therefore, which our souls must eat or perish, is His Divine flesh,—that very "Bread of God," which came from Heaven. This Divine Bread, the Lord's flesh, is the Only Substance that has Life in Itself; and therefore, the Only, Eternal Substance. It is "*He*," Jehovah's Christ, "the Only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth."

V.—The sun's nature really becomes organized in the things which grow out of the earth, and in all creatures which live on the earth. Witness all vegetable substances, all flesh and bones, which are chiefly composed of flame, or solar properties. So the Divine Spirit, given forth from Jesus, glorified, becomes organized in all souls who receive Him as "the Bread of God." They are made partakers of the Divine Nature, and consequently inherit

Eternal Life. For immortality is inherent in God only.

VI.—Suppose the sun were simply a globe of light, revealing the defects, and the barrenness of the earth, but *not imparting himself*, always shining before our eyes, as a model of Beauty, but never giving out his own energy to make the earth beautiful:—what would the earth be the better for such a model! Though myriads of eloquent tongues should be appointed to direct attention to such a sun, and to extol his beauty, in spite both of teaching and example, the world would abide a cold desert to eternity. O ye miserable preachers of virtue, learn a lesson. You think you do well to eulogize the perfection of Christ before the people; but wherein are the people the better? The lowest and most immoral of the people have no doubt of the perfection of Christ. You may set the most life-like picture of a healthy man before the sick man's eyes; but the grand question abides, *How is the sick man to get health?* The world needs a self-imparting sun. Sinful souls could tell you that they are only mocked by a Divine Example.—'If that is all that you can preach to us, you may as well give over preaching. If you can tell us how our souls can be *changed into new creatures*, we

will then confess that you have a *real* Gospel for us. But as for your virtue-gospel, although you make it sound very much like Gospel, with its frequent allusions to the Blessed Pattern of our Lord's Life, it leaves us with unchanged souls. You are artist-preachers, you bring to our hunger the picture of bread,—most exactly and elegantly done, we grant, but then we want *bread.* We are actually needy, and we want actual bread. In other words, we want to hear of an *actual Saviour;* of One Who not only is perfect Himself, but Who can, and will, impart His own Divine Spirit to us, to make us like Him. Nothing will avail us, short of being "new creatures;" speak to us, therefore, of a Saviour Who can create us anew in Himself.'

Such *is* the Saviour of the New Testament, no mock Saviour, but One Who gives His own flesh for the life of the world. "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." Eph. ii. 10. "The new man is created after God, in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. iv. 24.

VII.—With the sun in the firmament for a symbol, it ought not to be difficult to conceive the *universality* of "the Bread of God." As the sun waits upon sown seed, so does the Only Vital Substance, wait upon "every creature," to quicken

him and build him up for ever. It is omnipresent: every day, in every quarter of the world, men are reading, that they must eat the flesh of Jesus, or perish. Yea, and many in the east and in the west, in the north and in the south, are deriving from Him spirit and life. Now the Lord's flesh, which He also calls "Spirit and Life," is by no means a *non*-entity, but the most precious entity. It is "*meat indeed.*" It "giveth life to the world." But if it were not Eternal Life, how could it endow the eater with eternal life? "The Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that Eternal Life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." "And we are in Him that is True, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the True God and Eternal Life." 1 Jno. v. 20.

VIII.—The same symbol of the sun illustrates the *exhaustlessness* of our Divine Bread. The sun gives himself and yet loses nothing. He imparts himself to every eye, every leaf, every element, yet remains whole. Much more can the sun's Creator, "The Father of Lights," supply the need of every creature out of the riches of His glory by Christ Jesus, without diminishing His own fulness. O "the Bread of God!" All souls need It, all souls may

find It, and have It, if they will seek for It. It is not far from every one of us. As many as eat It live by It, for God dwells in them and they in God. "As I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me."

IX.—The Bread of God is *One, yet manifold.* It is that Divine Simplicity, Which comprehends all variety. It is the Spirit of Life from God, the manifestations and operations of Which are endless. It gives life and sustenance to all the children of God; namely, to all the orders of holy angels, to all the human "nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues which stand before the throne," and to all Heaven-born souls in the flesh. Each and all derive their distinctive quickening and support from the One Bread. God has but One Thing to give. But God's One Thing is the First Principle of all things, and therefore equally related to the peculiar wants of all creatures. "The Bread of God" is that Divine Substance in Which all the wonders of God have a unitive life. Therefore the Son of God not only calls It, "My flesh," but "*Me.*" "He that eateth *Me,*" &c., &c. "*I am* the Bread of Life." "The Bread of God" is creative Bread,—generating and upbuilding the Divine Nature in every one who receives It. But

as the *receiving* must be with *appetite*, the Lord calls it *eating*, and pronounces them Blessed who *hunger*.

X.—"Evermore give us this Bread." So said the people, when they heard the Lord say, that It would give them *Life*. The Lord replied to them, by declaring, again and again, that whosoever ate It should *never die*. "I am that Bread of Life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the Bread Which cometh down from Heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever," &c., &c., &c. It is the Bread of Holy Life, there is no corruption in It. It is the Bread of the Blessed Life, there is no element of strife, nor unrest in It. It is the Bread of Eternal Life, there is no death in It. "Lord, evermore give us this Bread."

XI.—Thus saith the Lord, It is given more largely and freely than It can be received. "This is the Bread" (not only Which *came* down from Heaven, but) "Which *cometh* down from Heaven." It is coming and coming evermore. The air is not so near us, the light is not so free. But alas! though "The Bread of God" is much more pre-

cious and more essential, than either air, or light, the complaint stands written, that It is not valued, not desired. "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto Me and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Base and perishing things are coveted, but God's unspeakable Gift is proposed to unwilling hearts. "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have Life."

XII.—Our souls can no more live by any mere thoughts, reasonings, or convictions about "the Bread of God," than our bodies can live by merely thinking about natural bread. If man had only intelligent powers, but not natural appetites, he might analyze bodily bread, reason and talk about it, but he could not appropriate it, digest it, and convert it into his living flesh and bones. The bread of this world only nourishes and builds up the man who *eats* it. "The Bread of God," likewise, gives eternal life to those only who appropriate It. Eating may, or may not, be associated with the rational apprehension of the thing eaten. It is essential to eat: it is not essential to understand the elementary properties of food. Many have a keen *appetite* for the Bread of Life

who *know* very little about it. On the other hand, many, I fear, have *knowledge*, but very little *hunger*.

Mediate, between our natural and our spiritual appetites, are the reasoning powers. We can bring these powers to bear on either earthly or heavenly things. But mere thought, or conception, appropriates neither. It is hunger that eats; and eating saves the body. Spiritual illumination is good, but spiritual hunger is better. Spiritual hunger *eats* the Bread of God. Nothing short of eating It saves the soul. "He that eateth Me, even *he shall live by Me*." The knowledge of doctrines *about Christ* is a miserable, and indeed, fatal substitute, for the reception of Christ. "The Bread of God!" "Eat ye all of It." "He that eateth of this Bread shall live for ever." "This do in remembrance of *Me*." "I am the Bread of Life." Herein is that Divine Spirit, Which being drawn inward, by spiritual hunger, changes the soul into the Divine Image from glory to glory. "Now the Lord is that Spirit."

GOOD NEWS.

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The Lord.—"If any man thirst, let *him come unto Me, and drink.*" Jno. vii. 37.

The Creature.—And what shall I drink, my Lord, if I come unto Thee for drink?

The Lord.—Thou shalt drink *Life*, my creature, if thou comest to Me. Jno. iv. 10. Rev. xxii. 17.

The Creature.—O my Saviour, all that a man hath he will give for his life. But *what Life* is that which Thou wilt give me to drink, if I come to Thee?

The Lord.—I will give thee to drink none other than *My Own Life*, My child, even that very Eternal Life, which I had with My Father, before the world was. And know this, that the Life that was from everlasting, rejoicing before God, will

rejoice before Him, when the world is no more. It is the sweet, innocent, unmixed life of Eternity. It rises in God, and flows through Me, unto all creatures. Rev. xxii. 2. Prov. viii. 30, 35.

The Creature.—O my Blessed Saviour, this is indeed "good news of great joy."

The Lord.—Truly it is "good news." But it is God's "good news;" and while it is exactly what "every creature" needs, it is too good for the many. All that a man hath will he give for *his* life; but few are willing to renounce their own life for *My Life.* Isa. liii. 3. Jno. v. 40.

The Creature.—My Lord, how can the "good news" of God, be *too good?*

The Lord.—God's own Eternal Life is not too good for Him to give, but it is too good to be *well received* by the fallen creature. It is more than he desires; it is *too good for his depraved appetite.* Rom. viii. 5-7. 1 Cor. ii. 14. If one comes without desire, and even puts his mouth to the Fountain, he will not get Life. Therefore said I: "If any man *thirst*, let him come to Me, and drink." Yea, the *thirst* must be in the very inmost of the

soul; for *My Life must be drawn in thither*, but how can it be indrawn by one who thirsts not?

The Creature.—O my Lord, *I thirst*, and I come to Thee, blessing Thee, not only for the Fountain of Life, but for *my thirst.*

The Lord.—Thou dost well to bless God for His grace: thy thirst is His grace in thee. Eph. ii. 8. The river of Life might flow through thy mouth and through thy soul, and yet if thou didst not thirst, it would neither comfort, nor save thee. Matt. v. 6.

The Creature.—O my Lord, explain to me how it is, that the Water of Life might flow through my soul, and yet not save me.

The Lord.—Is it not written, that, Christ is very nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart? Rom. x. 6–8. The river of Life is none other than My Presence with every creature. But the soul that thirsts after the spirit of the world, and drinks the same into its being, cannot also drink in My Spirit. James iv. 4. 1 Jno. ii. 15. No one can drink My Life into his life, unless his life thirsts for It. Salvation is "*Life to life.*" If the creature does not draw *My Life* into his deepest life, *his deepest*

life abides unwashed, unchanged, and therefore unsaved. Jno. iii. 5. Eph. v. 26, 27. Titus iii. 5, 6.

The Creature.—O my Lord, give me a deeper thirst for Thy Life. Let my thirst be the thirst of my *whole soul.* But if I drink Thy Life into my soul, will it not work a great change *in the very nature of my soul?*

The Lord.—A *great change* indeed. Thou hast seen the change from night to day; and the change from winter to summer. But the change in thee will be still greater, and more wonderful. My Life will do away with death in thee. It will make thee even in body like unto My glorious Body. It will make thee utterly "a New Creature." Phil. iii. 21. 2 Cor. v. 17. 2 Tim i. 10. Rev. xxi. 4.

The Creature.—May I hear, my Saviour, how it will do away with death in me?

The Lord.—My Life will remove death by putting away all evil from thee. Silently and gradually, as winter is changed into summer, will My Life steal upon thee, until there is no other life in thee. 1 Cor. iii. 18. Gal. ii. 20.

The Creature.—My Holy Gracious Lord, I know that Thy Life must needs have a wonderful power to subdue all things to Itself, in the soul that drinks It. But if It goes on changing and changing the nature and form of my inner man, what will the successive changes come to at last?

The Lord.—At last, in virtue of the kindred nature, which My Life will generate and perfect in thee, thou wilt be able to dwell with Me, and to see Me as I am. Jno. xiv. 3. xvii. 24.

The Creature.—When I am changed into Thine Image, will the Blessed Water of Life, which flows from Thee, also flow from me?

The Lord.—Yes; from My Life in thee; that is, *according to thy measure.* If I am in thee, and thou in Me, as it is written: "Out of thy belly shall flow streams of Living Water." Jno. vii. 38.

The Creature.—The Water of Life then, and the Holy Spirit, are the Same Thing.

The Lord.—Yes, whether it is written, that the Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Father

and the Son; or, the River of the Water of Life proceedeth from God and the Lamb, the Same Thing is signified. That Water is Truth, It is Light, It is Life, It is very God proceeding from very God, and constitutes all the Wisdom, Life, and Joy of Heaven, and all the illuminating, cleansing, comforting power of the Church below. Jno. xiv. 16–18. xvii. 17. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

The Creature.—My Lord, how long will it be before my soul is so far changed into Thine Image, that Thy Spirit will flow from me?

The Lord.—It is thy part to be faithful, persevering, and patient; but it belongs not to thee to know the times and seasons. Matt. xxiv. 13. Rev. ii. 10. For a long while to come, thine own degenerate spirit will need all that thou canst drink of My Spirit. Another thing, thy appetite for My Life may neither be deep nor constant; and thus the perfecting of thine own nature will be retarded. Not till the self-life is humbled, smitten, slain, and dead in thee, canst thou be *wholly an organ of My Life.* But know this, that as soon as My Life *can* fully possess thee, *It will.* Rom. vi. 3–6. Phil. iii. 12–14. Think it not hard that thou must first undergo the crucifixion of thine own life, before thou canst

the meek vessel of My Life. Remember that e Holy Spirit proceeded not even from *My* umanity, until it was glorified, nor was it orified, before it suffered. Jno. vii. 39. Canst thou ink of My Cup, and be baptized with the baptism herewith I was baptized? Matt. xx. 22.

The Creature.—Lord, without Thee, I can ı nothing.

The Lord.—Wholly resign thyself to God, ıd there shall be wrought in thee all that thou nst ask, or think, and more. Eph. iii. 20. "With od all things are possible." Only be careful in ›thing to oppose thy will to Mine. 2 Cor. x. 5.

The Creature.—O my Lord, at present, I am ore conscious of my own filthiness, than of Thy oliness.

> "*Black*, I to the Fountain fly,
> Wash me, Saviour, or I die."

The Lord.—Yes, thy heart is very filthy, far orse than thou knowest. Jer. xvii. 9. Thou art so ul, that the Pure Water of Life, so far from washıg thee clean at once, is rendered dark and turbid ; *thee.* Thou art like an abominable vessel, full

of all manner of uncleanness, which thou takest to the spring, that the water may cleanse it. But how many times must the water pass through it, before it becomes a pure vessel! And yet more patient must thou be with the vessel of thy spirit, the corruption of which is its *life*, which life also thou *lovest*, and from which thou wilt not easily be parted. Rom. vii. 23, 24.

The Creature.—O my Lord, what if sin, after all, innate sin, should have the victory!

The Lord.—Sin will have the victory, if thou dost not *continue* to come to Me for Life. But if thou continuest to drink My Life into thee, then *My Life*, and not sin, will at last win the day. Jno. viii. 31–36. 1 Cor. xv. 57.

THE NEARNESS OF GOD.

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THOU art near, O God, Thou art near, Thy whole Name is near to us; for so Thy wondrous works declare. Psa. lxxv. 1. We must understand by the Name of God, every thing included in the Divine Nature. The works of God reveal *His Name*, by shewing what He is. To praise His Name is to be in love with all His Qualities. "Hallowed by Thy *Name*," means that every thing in God is most holy, and therefore to be pondered and cherished with deepest reverence. The Old Testament form of petition, "for Thy Name's sake," means for the sake of all that is called God. It is an appeal to the whole Godhead. "*For Thy Name's sake*, O Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it is great." Psa. xxv. 11. "*For Thy Name's sake*, lead me and guide me." Psa. xxxi. 3. "Help us, O God of our salvation, *for the Glory of Thy Name*: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, *for Thy Name's sake*." Psa. lxxix. 9. "O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do Thou it

for Thy Name's sake. Do not abhor us, *for Thy Name's sake.*" Jer. xiv. 7, 21. On more God-honoring terms, it is impossible to address Him. The creature makes no account of himself; but implores God to have respect unto His own Glory.—Illustrate Thine own Nature. Bring Thine own Heart out to view. Our sin is against us; but be not Thou against us, O Lord, for we are Thy creatures. Exalt Thy Truth and Justice, by destroying sin in us; and at the same time, exalt Thy Love and Mercy, by forgiving and saving us. "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not *for Thine own sake,* O my God." Dan. ix. 19. For God's "own sake," and for His "Name's sake," are the same thing.

II.—And since the New Testament teaches us both to worship God, and to ask whatsoever we ask, *in the Name* of *Jesus,* it is certain that every thing which we worship in God, and every thing by which we are saved, are in the Lord Jesus Christ. "The Name of the Lord Jesus," is the same as the depth and fulness of the Divine Nature,—outwritten for our sakes. For God will not, cannot, give His glory to another. Compare Isa. xiv. 22, 23, xlviii. 11. Phil. ii. 10. "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of

the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." "For Mine own sake, even for Mine own sake, I will do it: and *I will not give My glory to another.*" But to Jesus "God *hath given* a Name which is above every name: that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, *to the glory of God the Father.*" The Lord Jesus, therefore, is not "*another.*" "In Him dwelleth all the Fulness of Godhead." He is the revelation of the great Name, Jehovah God. The Old Testament form, "for Thine own sake," or "for Thy Name's sake," and the New Testament form, "for Christ's sake," are, (with respect to our knowledge,) different methods of appeal, but they are not different appeals. In shewing us Mercy, for Christ's sake, He is doing it for His own sake. God has not changed His mind, nor recalled His words: "*For Mine own sake,* even for Mine own sake, I will do it."

III.—The works of God are sought out by those who love Him, *for the sake of His Name.* Too many scan His works, not as *His,* but as

nature's, and miss His Name. Proper views of creation are deep views. Our eyes are not strictly human, until the intelligence which is of faith uses them. The knowledge of the Holy One, that "Pearl of great price," is *hidden* in nature's field, and the eye, uninformed by Divine Light, being brutish, sees the field only, but not the Pearl. In a certain sense, science, if it be without Faith, makes the scholar less human than the barbarian. The rude, unschooled child of nature, is never wholly without faith. He has an instinct of the invisible. Though it be, as in a mist of great darkness, the Wonderful One *does* loom out before him. He suspects a Presence Which He cannot see. He is capable of awe. Happily, we know that faith and science are not incompatible. They are often found living and growing together; and, like the right hand and the left of the same man, helping each other. Otherwise, without a moment's hesitation, I should say: 'Give me Faith without science, rather than science without Faith.' Let me, by all means, have the knowledge of elements and their affinities, of laws and their operation, of causes and their effects, if thereby I can discern the Great Name more fully, more clearly: if not, have the goodness to take your spectacles and your chemistry,

and do your best with them: as for me, I prefer a *living* relation with the *Living God.*

O there is a fearful degeneracy, which gives evidence of its utterly Satanic depth of deceit, by seeking to pass for knowledge, and even for Wisdom, at the same time that it gives woful demonstration, of the fearful capacity of living in the midst of God's works, *without God.* But however refined and subtle, what is it but the capacity of a clever brute, to be present where God works, without realizing His nearness? Yea, to take nature for a huge, galvanized corpse, and to dissect her accordingly, is most affectingly idiotic. Treat man, as the dry disciples of science treat nature, and in your hands, he will verily become a corpse;—sans every thing, *but death.* Stand by, keep your rude hands off, and let the Divine Presence affect you. Nature is steeped in *Life.* She glows and throbs with *Life.* But if you begin to meddle, to pry, to separate, to burn, you will get death and ashes, but the "All and in all" will escape you. "Moses, Moses, draw *not nigh* hither." Thou art near enough, stand still, put reverence on, and from the midst of the bush, God will reach thee, and affect thee, where thou art. Otherwise, if thou layest reverence by, and puttest scrutiny on, thou shall find a bush, but God thou shall not find. Wilt thou

examine the grass to see how it grows, how the blood circulates in its tiny veins, behold, in thy hands, circulation and growth are no more, it turns to hay. Prophets and poets are not scrutinizers and destroyers, but seers: their souls are more to them than cunning instruments. They bring stillness, awe and wonder to their observations. They fall down, they worship, their souls kindle, they are inspired. Then they speak with their tongue, and their words, like the works of God, are parables, which equally express and conceal the Divine Wisdom. Hodmen burden themselves with material, and think that they have much; and they have much *death*, but no *inspiration*. In his highest mood, man hears a voice commanding him to regard the very ground on which he stands, as not common. *Soil* do you call it? Is it not a honeycomb of mysteries? Is it not full of *soul* and doings? As soon as you put your seed therein, is it not apprehended by Power and Life? The Doer is present. O God, *Thou* art *near;* Thou art the energy of the sunbeam, and the efficacy of all things. Yet art Thou as distinct from sunbeam, and from all things and creatures, as the sun is distinct from our eyes, or the atmosphere, from our lungs. What were eyes without light? what were lungs without air? what were universal nature without God? The sun

in itself does nothing: it is but the adapted medium by which God glanceth throughout nature. Whence is the *life* of our blood? "Thy Name is near, O God." Will thou examine the blood to find the life thereof? It is vain, the life is gone: nothing but *dead* blood will abide in thy vessel. In ourselves we live not, we move not, we are not. "*In God* we live and move and have our being." More to us than our eyes, or our brains, and nearer to us than our hearts, or souls, art Thou, O God; for Thou art the Life of these. Thou art All: without Thee, all is nothing.

"Unto Thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto Thee do we give thanks: for that THY NAME is *near*, Thy wondrous works declare." But we must keep silence before Thy Great Name; for we cannot declare the greatness of Thy *works*, how much less can be speak *Thy* Greatness. Yet is Thy Greatness near, O God. We think *in* it, as well as *of* it; we are upheld by it, we are bowed down under it; it fills us with boldness and awe; and while we worship, it embraces us.

All the works of God declare that His Greatness is the greatness of *Goodness*. Evil, pain, misery, do come in, but they come in, as weeds and mildew appear in the garden. Only the useful, the good, and the beautiful, accord with the

gardener's will and design: the weeds and the mildew are contrary to his will and design. Of all the evil which has come into the great field of the universe, it is written: "An enemy hath done this." Evil has no place in the Name of God. The one word which includes every quality of God, is 'Love.'

The First-born Son of Love is *Wisdom.* The Wisdom which is of Love is as full of Love, as the Eternal Love is full of Wisdom. We see everywhere a loving purpose, and wise contrivance, running through a beautiful order, unto a good end.

And *Holiness* is very legible in the Name of God, for even under the vanity and corruption of nature, *Purity* characterises all His works. How clean light is! how clean all plants, flowers, and leaves are, when they first appear! how clean the newly fallen snow is! And who can help admiring the universal provision in nature, for using up all uncleanness? Poor apostate nature, in all her forms, from the lichen on the rock, up to the divine countenance of man, is ceaselessly lapsing into corruption; and an Unseen Hand, as ceaselessly annihilating corruption. And what is the Gospel, but a world-wide remedy for spiritual pollution! The Spirit also, that moveth in our hearts, and by Which we condemn ourselves, and

shudder at our own impurity, not only testifies that our God is Holy, but that His Holy Name is very nigh unto us. "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," the Cherubim are abashed before Thee; and yet Thine awful Holiness, operating in a form of wondrous *Gentleness*, through the Son of Thy Love, is making dark and sinful souls holy, as Thou art Holy.

Again, as to *Beauty*, though the universe, which we behold, is but an outer court, "without the veil," it gives proof enough that God is not indifferent to the *appearance* of things. It were endless to quote examples of the beauty of nature. But in the human face, when the Holy Spirit is working in the heart the first motions of penitential grief and love, more than all the beauty of nature is gathered into a single expression. What a veil of softness and meekness, what a virgin-innocence, what an inexpressible charm of countenance, accompanies the work of God in the soul! And what is the "Glory" of Heaven, which has so often been the last word of the departing Christian, but the diviner Beauty of that higher world, where the Great Name more fully comes out to view? And who can imagine the beauty of the resurrection body, in which God will reveal His Beauty, as in His highest work? "He will *beautify* the

meek with salvation." "The Lord Jesus will change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His own *glorious* Body."

That "*Power* belongeth unto God," is too obvious to be noted: let us dwell a moment therefore, on the *Patience* of His Almighty Power. What creatures expect to be done in their century, God only accomplishes through many ages. When the Spirit of His Purpose, namely, the prophetic Spirit, pervades and illustrates the human spirit, it is taken for granted, that, what God will surely do, He will *soon* do. It behoves the seer to reflect well on the *Patience* of God. God has not yet fulfilled His promise to Abraham. He is fulfilling it, and will fulfil it, but not quickly, as men understand quickly. Wondrous to all angels and good men, is the Patience, with which God waits upon this world of stubborn rebellion, and crying wrongs.

Once more, very "meek and lowly" is our God. In the meek beauties of the earth, which, although full of sweetness, scarcely lift up their heads, I can see the *Humility* of the Divine Glory. I can see the same in *worth* every where, for the greater the worth, the more hath it of humility. God humbles Himself, that His creatures may behold Him, both in Heaven and earth. The virtues of all things are tokens of His Presence; but He puts on great

meekness before the eyes of sinners. He appears "as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground." You shall find Him in a manger. You shall see Him going down to Nazareth to be subject unto His creatures. The King of the whole earth comes riding on an ass. Girding Himself with a towel, He poureth water into a bason, and stooping down to His disciples, He washes their feet, and wipes them with the towel wherewith He is girded. Without opening His mouth, see Him, going up the hill to Calvary, and carrying the heavy wood of His own Cross.

IV.—O my soul, "this Same Jesus" is near *thee*. All that is included in "the Name, Which is above every name," is *very nigh* to thee. The Spirit of God in Christ, Which is as human as it is Divine, and full of "Goodwill" towards thee, besets thee before and behind. Thou art in the very midst of all that is tender and compassionate towards thee. God, even thine own God, full of the help which thou needest, is close to thee, without, and still closer to thee, within. Turn thyself wholly to Him, open thy soul to Him; for near as He is to thee, He can yet be far nearer. Renounce thyself, and in penitence and meek desire, attract to thee the virtues of the Eternal Name, and make

them thine own. They wait, they long to be owned by thee, that they may own thee. They long to enrich thee, that thy peace may be, not in things mutable, but in things immutable. Sweetness dwells in the rose, and heat in burning coals; but more essentially does God dwell in those who love Him. There is no conscious life in the rose, to love its own sweetness, no purpose to retain it; but souls *love* That which dwelleth in them, and That which dwelleth in them *loves* them. It is God; It is the Lord Jesus; It is the Holy Spirit. With God, it is a small thing to give love and wisdom, holiness and beauty, power and patience, humility and glory, to His creatures: He gives *Himself* to them, and all virtues and beatitudes, in Himself.

V.—There are seasons in which the children of God are quite conscious of His awful, blessed nearness to them. For example, when they long after a better spirit than their own:—(which longing, they know and are sure, does not originate with their own spirit):—when they master their own will, by the uprising of a holy beam, from a deeper place in them than their own will:—when their whole soul fills with awe and sweetness, and they become meekly passive to the

Holy invading Presence:—when in circumstances, calculated to excite and trouble them, they feel, in spite of the agitating circumstances, "a great calm:"—at such times they know that the Divine Loving-kindness is not only better, but *nearer* to them, than their own life. Great is the intimacy between the sun and our flesh, when he diffuses his heat through and through every atom of our flesh, every drop of our blood; but greater still, far greater, is the intimacy between God and human souls,—the souls that love Him. For their love to Him is *His own Love*, dwelling in them; and the relation must indeed be close, and not only close, but indissoluble, between God and His own Love.

VI.—Love draws God so mightily, and God yields Himself so freely to love, that the humble souls who love Him are said even to have "*boldness in the day of Judgment.*" God Himself is their boldness. The Holiness of God, in them, is their defence from the judgment of the Divine Holiness. As soon as the soul quits its *own life*, the Life of God enters in, and possesses that soul. Strictly speaking, the life of man is the Divine Life in him. Hence the repeated teaching of our Lord: That, whoever keepeth his fallen life, shall

never regain his original life. Nothing therefore can be more full of tenderness than the apparently harsh saying, that, "If any man come to Me, and hate not *his own life*, he cannot be My disciple." Vacate, turn your back upon, your own apostate life, and receive with open arms the Life which, in the beginning, God gave to man, and has given to him again, in His Son. "This is the record, that God hath given to us Eternal Life, and this Life is in His Son." How strong the house of your spirit will be, how august, how serene, how meekly bold, how boldly meek, when God alone is the life thereof. St. John was so affected by the majesty and glory of one of his departed brethren, the prophets, that he fell down at his feet to worship him. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." This much the Lord assures us, that we, who are now struggling and groaning in these tabernacles of dust, shall presently shine forth as suns, through the indwelling of the Divine Glory.

AIDS TO THOUGHT.

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THE cycles and the circles of God's own Eternity are incorporated in that new nature, which God, through His Son, is building up, and establishing in us. Man at present is a poor, weak, corruptible creature, of nature's building; but he is to be "God's building;" and God's building is full of God. To eternity it "cannot be moved."

GOD prepares of His Goodness for the poor, in order to prepare the poor for His goodness. Our poverty consists not only in being empty of the Divine Goodness; but chiefly, in having no heart thereto. Our poverty is a stubborn fulness, which resists the true riches. Before we can be filled with the riches of God, we must empty ourselves of ourselves. But here is the great difficulty; for we are not willing to sacrifice ourselves unto God. What can be done then? God Himself takes the

grand initiative, and sacrifices Himself unto us: if by any means, He may relate Himself to our need.

WE *confess* our nothingness before God; but do we mean it? Or, do we think to please God by untruth? It is one thing to wish to be *thought* humble; and another thing *to be* humble. True humility is not unwilling to be thought proud. For if it be thought proud, it will go without the praise of humility. And Humility is only concerned *to be* humble, and not to have the praise of it.

Humility is so beautiful in the sight of God, and, to fallen creatures, so difficult of attainment, that it must be the care and labor of our life, to deepen its root within us. Especially, we should press our sins into this service. If we keep them *before us*, to chastise and humble our souls therewith, God will cast them *behind His back*. If sinners should be humble; how much more, sinners who are seeking to be saved by an *Humble* Saviour!

"THY words have upholden him that was falling; and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees. *But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.*" Job iv. 4, 5. It does not follow that those who comfort others, will always have comfort themselves. A person may very sincerely console and help others, in the gloomy and dark day, and yet be bitterly in need of consolation himself, when the dark day comes to him.

Eliphaz wants to make out, that because Job is so sorely smitten in spirit, under his affliction, therefore, the consolation which he once ministered to others, must have been mere wind. What! are the xiv, xv, and xvi, chapters of St. John's Gospel empty words, because, immediately after speaking them, the Lord fell into an agony of spirit, and even pleaded with His poor disciples for help?

If you examine into it, Eliphaz, you will find that just in proportion as one is fitted to comfort another, *is his own liability to overwhelming distress.* To be a real comforter, a person must have profound sympathies; but profound sympathies are always in association with keen sensibilities, and keen sensibilities expose their possessor to a depth of anguish, utterly unin-

telligible to ordinary souls. As is the capacity to be a heavenly comforter, such is the capacity to be an awful sufferer.

Righteous people, of the Eliphaz-school, are on most comfortable terms with themselves; but, with their shallow estimate of things, they are miserable judges of God's dealings with deeper souls.

WE shall meet many in the day of Judgment besides God. If we meet any whom we have not *loved*, that will spoil our boldness. Nothing but the Life of God's own Love in us, can give us boldness in that day. As is our love, to our fellow creatures, will be our boldness before them, in Eternity. There is no evil affection in love. "Love is of God." Love is boldness itself. If a single breath of Hell lurks in us towards any creature, it will unman us, when we meet before God. Our knowledge will not help us in the day of Judgment; "wonderful works" will not help us; but Love will help us. "Love to your neighbour," says St. Augustine, "will prepare your soul to see God." Goliath, in his armour, was not defended as Love defends us: Solomon, in all his glory, was not clothed as Love clothes us. As fire burneth

up wood, hay, stubble; so will God's Judgment consume all our religion, save that which springs from His own Love in us.

"*She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework.*" The stillness, the intention, the attention, the nicety, the patience, the faithfulness to plan, and the perseverance, which are necessary to successful needlework, are precisely the qualities, which are essential to the progress of the work of Grace in the soul. And as every stitch of the needle contributes something towards the most elaborate piece of work; so every thought, which the soul turns towards God, every desire after holiness, every gracious affection cherished towards any creature, every right word, every least act done from love to Christ, or from submission to His will, becomes inwrought into the soul's eternal nature. The soul's life is written *in itself.* Nothing is lost, nothing omitted. Whatsoever is hiddenly done, in the closet of the soul, in this life, shall come into manifestation, in eternity; and the raiment without, shall express all "the beauty of holiness," which has been acquired within.

CHRIST, OUR JUDGE.

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THERE are two very different ways of accounting for the reputed dulness of certain subjects. The first, charges the dulness upon the subjects, the second, charges it not upon the subjects, but upon the judges. To owls and bats, nothing in this world is so dull as sunshine. To a gay, young sensualist, the life of truth and innocence would be insufferably dull; but is it therefore dull? To do the will of God constitutes the Heaven of angels; but not the heaven of worldly men. Unregenerate men and women are oppressed by the very thought of God. Through the force of conscience, or habit, or both, they consent occasionally to hear something about subjects which involve their eternal welfare; but it is a heavy time, dull work. According to the estimate of this world, Christ and human salvation, judgment and eternity, are very tame subjects. Who reckons them essential, either to his business, or pleasure? What man of the world ever welcomes them to his heart? By common

consent, they are banished out of the world, as being out of place, and altogether unprofitable. But "what can't be cured must be endured;" and men do *endure*, as patiently as they can, the *hearing* of these things. But, if you observe, on leaving Church, they lose no time in changing the subject. O how dull the souls of men must be! how degraded! that their own glory, their endless glory, should be no glory to them! The Serpent has enchanted them, and dust and the glory of dust, have more interest for them, than Truth and the glory of God.

Shareholders in mines, banks, and railways, are not dependant upon the eloquence of the chairman, for interest in their meetings. They are interested in spite of the *in*eloquence of the chairman. Their shares are their interest. The present state of the market, and the future probabilities of their investment, are a real concern to them. If Sunday hearers were actual shareholders, if they felt that they were possessors of scrip, in the hand-writing of God, entitling them to their respective shares, in the Kingdom of Heaven, Sunday subjects would not be void of interest. If they saw and felt *God* to be not only a *real* object, but the only Source of their glory and joy; and more than that, if they knew that they were

heirs of distinguished rank and possessions in His Kingdom, they would supply their quietest Bible-readings with enthusiasm enough. But dull, heavy, sordid spirits, require the preacher's eloquence and zeal to supply their lack of interest. The world is *their only real object*, and the same dull world their only source of gain and pleasure: the most that they can give to Bible-subjects is a respectful *hearing*.

Well has the Holy Ghost spoken of "the foolishness of preaching." Observe, not the preaching of *foolishness*, but "the foolishness of *preaching*." The foolishness is chargeable not to the thing preached, but to the degradation of mankind, which requires that a concern for their own life and glory, should be *talked* into them. You would only laugh at the folly and loquacity of the man, who should rack his brains, and exhaust his energy, to dilate eloquently before you, upon an estate in which you were deeply interested. It is indeed a curious fact, that God has commissioned an army of talkers, to go into all the world, to talk men, if possible, into an affection for their own eternal inheritance. Go, saith the Lord, talk over, and over, and over again the Gospel, to every creature, that his inveterate prejudices may be talked out of him, and that his original, but long-lost sympathies,

may be talked into him, and My Spirit shall help you. "Lo, I am with you."

II.—Under the circumstances, it is the highest wisdom and the purest love, to consecrate body, soul, and spirit, to this ministry of talking. Infinite Wisdom has appointed it. More, the Eternal Word, Himself, took a human tongue, to talk wisdom into men. Talk on, talk on, ye men of God, in spite of the "foolishness," which must ever attach to *talking* about those things which are above and beyond all talk.

It is true, that, laboring as men are, under an awful paralysis of their spiritual powers, nothing short of spirit and life from God can reach their case; but God is pleased to associate His Spirit and Life with the preached word. Behold the ground of all spiritual insensibility!—Mankind are palsied throughout the whole of their *right side.* In other words, they are alive only towards the left-hand interests of their poor, perishing flesh; but, towards the right-hand interests of their endless being, cold, torpid and dead. When vital power has departed from one side of the body, it is accepted as a startling premonition, that the death of the whole body is certainly not far off. So, man's lack of feeling towards God and towards

his own everlasting peace, is a sign that spiritual death is already reigning in his soul. Christ, Who of God, is made Life-giver to the human race, is present, in all faithful preaching, to awaken dead souls, and to swallow up their death in the victory of His own endless Life.

III.—Man's connection with Christ never can be dissolved. Not only has He accomplished redemption for the human race; but He is the Truth of God;—in His hands are the balances of Divine Justice. Therefore, all judgment is committed to Him. The pardoned and the unpardoned, the just and the unjust, the holy and the filthy, Christ will judge. He will award to every man his destiny. I contend not for words. Truth *is* the Judge of all things. Christ is God, as Truth. The judgment of Christ is simply *the very verdict, the Word of God, the infinitely right and true decision,* about every one.

IV.—Indeed the Truth of God, or what is the same thing, the sentence of Christ, is self-executing. Instead of there being any thing unnatural, or arbitrary in the "Judgment to come," it is the utter absence of all arbitrariness. It is that which is inevitable. The proper stand to be taken on

behalf of every thing revealed in the Scriptures is not: 'It is true, because the Bible says so,' but rather: Because it is true, and cannot be otherwise, *therefore the Bible says so.*

For example: Does any one inquire, what his portion will be in eternity? The answer is unvarying: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Or, suppose one to ask, 'What shall I be in eternity?' the answer is definite and unalterable:—"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." That is, whatsoever you have become in time, *that* you shall be in eternity. Or, if the question be asked, '*Where* shall I be in eternity?' the answer is, You shall be there, and in those very circumstances, and with those very companions, for which your life in the body has qualified you. And you shall certainly *not* be in those circumstances, nor in that society, for which your life in the body has *dis*-qualified you. Such is the future judgment; it is the judgment of *Truth.* It will reveal to every one *his own* condition, give to every one *his own* portion, and put every one in "his own place." If you go into eternity, a natural spirit, it is impossible that you should have the experience and

lot of a regenerate spirit. If Christ, namely, the Divine Nature, is begotten and formed in your friend, but *not* begotten in you, then the inheritance of your friend, in eternity, must be as distinct from yours, as the Divine Nature is distinct from your nature. Every soul shall receive "*according to what he hath done.*" If, with his whole heart and soul, he has entered into a living covenant with God in Christ, he shall inherit all the results of that covenant. If he has not done *this*, whatever else he has done, he shall not inherit the fruits of God's covenant. He has cut himself off from the possibility of harmonious relationship with God. He must abide by "*what he hath done.*" He is an unclean, unwashen spirit. "He that is filthy, let him be filthy still," is the decision of the Judgment-seat. He might have been made holy, if he would have put his needy spirit in direct communication with the mercy and holiness of God, through His only channel, Christ Jesus, but he would not.

V.—Oh *what a blunder, for an eternal creature,* to deprive his inner nature, (the germinal man,) of accordance with the Divine Nature; and thus *to disrelate himself with the only possible law of his well-being.* If there be such a thing as eternal

progress, there must be a law according to which that progress is realized. Our progress, upward, must depend upon our becoming *like God.* The Gospel reveals how this likeness may be brought about,—how the fallen creature, man, may be initiated into an eternal relation of peace with the Holy One. Our great temptation is to form the most gratifying relations that we can between our nature, *as it is,* and this present world, *as it is ;*—at the expense of forming unhappy relations with Eternal God. Most men do what they are tempted to do, namely, form tastes and habits which are irreconcileable with getting on in God's universe. The so called "*getting on*" in the world, is a golden delusion, as melancholy, as it is tempting. It is the heir of eternity falling a sacrifice to the pleasures and gains of this brief dream-life in the flesh. "Satan deceiveth the whole world." The fool thinks in his heart, that he is taking care of himself, by laying up "much goods," until he awakes from his dream and finds *himself* wholly uncared-for. He begins life, not mortal life, but endless life, *a wretched man.* Yea, his life is not life, but a bitter *death.* His very thoughts have perished, and his heart refuses to cheer him. He thought that he had done well, he thought that he was "rich and increased with

goods," but now that the visionary man has fallen away from the eternal man, he finds that he is destitute of every thing but burning desires and gnawing misery,—desires that he cannot gratify, and misery that he cannot abate. "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is *not rich towards God.*"

VI.—If the temptation, to seek first the present world and its goods, were not *immense*, there could be no such thing as right *glorious principle* in the world;—God could have no *heroic* adherents;—the life of faith would involve no *victory.* But the world *is* a mighty attraction, always present, and marvellously adapted to our eager senses and appetites: while man's real inheritance is out of sight, and only related to undeveloped, interior senses. Hence a transcendant grandeur attaches to the life of faith. It girds and inspires a man for the conquest of his own visible nature, and also of the whole visible creation. Therefore our Risen Lord, seven times in succession, makes exceeding great promises, "to him that *overcometh.*" It is a seven-fold victory over unreality, and it shall be honored and crowned with seven-fold glory and blessedness in the *real* world.

VII.—Vague, declamatory terror has very

little point, or force in it, but terror founded on the law of Eternal Truth, which is *God's own nature*, is a solemn thing. For a soul to be finally disqualified, for the one and only enduring pleasure, is a woe greater than can be named. The only enduring pleasure, possible, must be that which directly flows from the favor of God. To succeed in life, therefore, must be to acquire that inwrought likeness with God, which constitutes the creature's capacity to receive and enjoy the Divine favor.

VIII.—The unutterable misery, which man may secure to himself, (by failing to become meet for the only eternal pleasure,) can only be denied, by denying the greatness of his nature. The awful reality of Hell and the greatness of man's spiritual nature, stand, or fall, together. If the soul is inexplorable, if "the whole world" is as nothing compared with its worth, then whoever abuses "his own soul," secures unto himself an entail of tremendous consequences. Can the human spirit be measured, or fathomed? It is broader than the earth, it is higher than the stars, it is deeper than the sea. Answering then to the ruin and misery of immortal spirits, (with their deep under deep, desolation under desolation,) Hell must needs in-

clude hells, and lower hells, unto "lowest hell." Yea, the anguish of a lost soul must be *bottomless*, and therefore there *is* a "bottomless pit." Precious, precious, precious soul, unless you draw into your unfathomed spirit, the bottomless mercy of Jesus, the day will come, when your surface nature will dissolve, and this yawning, empty, aching, bottomless depth in you, will startle you into the consciousness that you are *lost*. Sin would not be the exceeding great and dreadful evil which it is, if man were not so great. Sin *is* an incalculable evil, because it signifies an incalculably great nature living on wrong principles, and for wrong ends. To make light of sin, is to make light of *man*. If sin is a trifle, there can be nothing great about the soul of man. But God only knows how to estimate sin, for He only knows the capacities of the soul.

Depend upon it, perdition is more awful than words can represent, because it is the ruin of a nature, too great for our conception. Pitiful cries of remorse, even in the body, have sometimes given hints of the fearful magnitude of the wrong, which the creature has committed against "his own soul." With his deep, wonderful, eternal being, stung through and through with his own folly, he has given the solemnest evidence, that no

creature can sin against God, who does not, at the same time, sin against an incomprehensible nature in himself.

IX.—Consider finally, what an acknowledgment it is of the vastness, and vast worth of your soul, that *Christ* is preached to you. *Christ* is God's provision for you. Your nature is so awfully great, *you want Christ.* He only can fill you. Worlds on worlds could not fill you. The all-creating WORD, by Whom the worlds were made, must dwell in you. Nothing less will suffice to keep Hell out of you, than "*Christ* in you."

Christ is your qualification to "appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." If *Christ* be in you, every thing that is at variance with the Divine Nature, will be judged before hand; and consequently future judgment will find nothing in you to condemn, but every thing to honor and reward. If Christ is not in you, sin is in you. Nothing but sin excludes Christ. If you are not, with your whole heart, a disciple of Christ, you are a slave of sin. Nothing but sin withholds any creature from Christ. Now Christ is Heaven. But sin is perdition.

X.—As Christians, we do not rest too much, nor rejoice too much, in the glorious truths, that,

we are saved by *Grace*;—that, we are justified by *Faith*;—that we are looking for the *Mercy* of the Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life, &c., &c.; but perhaps we do not dwell sufficiently on the fact, equally revealed, that we shall have to pass through the Court of *Divine Justice* at last.

On nothing is the New Testament more decisive, than that "*we*," Christians, "shall all stand before the *Judgment-seat* of Christ;"—that the bad things which we have done in the body, as well as the good, will all be taken into strict and impartial account; that every one of *us* will suffer his particular "loss," and obtain "his own reward;" that God "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." Rom. xiv. 10. 1 Cor. iii. 13-15. iv. 5. 2 Cor. v. 10.

For this very end is the Gospel preached unto us, with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, that we may be pardoned *now*, cleansed from all unrighteousness *now*, renewed *now*, made partakers of the Divine Holiness *now*;—that we may be able to pass through the burning Court of God's Eternal Justice at last. Our Heaven would be no Heaven, if Infinite Justice did not finally pass us in. Christ is now our *Saviour*, but in eternity, our *Judge*. At the Mercy-seat, we must prepare and make ready for the Judgment-seat. Every soul of man, that

enters into Heaven, will receive his authority from "the *Judgment-seat* of Christ." Otherwise, our admission to Heaven would dishonor God, and give no rest to our own consciences.

If our "faith in Christ" does not include the solemn consideration of our standing before the great white throne of God's Judgment, it is certain that we have some other "faith in Christ" than the Apostles had. Future judgment was to them, "the terror of the Lord." In view of it they said: "We *labour*, that we may be accepted of Him." St. Paul speaks of himself, as solemnly concerned, "lest, having preached to others, he himself should be castaway." "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." "Let us fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

IMAGINATION.

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EVERY human head conceals a busy brain. Every human breast conceals a heart of unknown depth. The human world, which comes into view, is as nothing, compared with that invisible world, which never comes to the surface. There are myriads of stars too remote for observation. The ocean casts up a few shells, but conceals its chief wonders: a few stray plants, or rather fragments of plants, are washed on shore, but myriads of acres, well rooted, live and flourish in their unknown depths. Likewise the hidden wealth of man's spirit by far exceeds the whole appearance and work of his life. "The heart of man is unsearchable." You may watch his outward conduct, but the way that his spirit takes, you cannot trace. You may hear every word that escapes from his lips, but he speaks every day a volume in his heart, which you cannot guess. Every line thereof is

preserved in the book of his life, but the contents of that book are naked only to the eye of God. Every man is another unknown world. He is not what you think he is. He is not where you see him. You may shut him up, but after all he is not shut up. He is living in the world of his own imagination. You cannot hinder him from living in that world. Nor can you set any limits to that world, wherein his spirit roams and rests. You think that he is walking in the street, by your side; but you are mistaken, he is in the midst of a group of angels, looking upon the face of God. You may live in your own spirit-world, but you cannot live in his, nor can you imagine it.

II.—Such is *the nobility of man's spirit,* that no influence, no occupation, no fascination, nor any reward, can induce him to live, exclusively, in the world to which he *seems* to be restricted. The actual world is too tame for him. Man has always imagined a fairer, richer, happier world; and with very inadequate elements and tools, he has labored in the direction of his idea. He has not realized his idea, and never will, under the sun.

1.—But as God made the worlds not out of things which appear: so, all great human works

were done within, before they were done without. The vestiges which remain to us of Babylon, Nineveh, Memphis and Athens, are witnesses to the soul-life of remote generations. Every great world-poem was once a solitary speculation, or vision, in the hidden life of some one man. And only a small part of that which was seen within, consented to come forth in expression:—visions upon visions of glorious things disdained to be imprisoned in speech. The best part of a great poem, or of any great book, is that which the reader must imagine.

2.—Imagination is both the Artist, and the admirer of Art. Works of imitation are the works of slaves. Immortal works of Art are executed from a certain fine phrensy of the imagination; and they make their appeal to the same in the beholder. No mere slave of his eyes can appreciate them. The soul must tell the eyes what to see: not the eyes, the soul.

3.—Imagination betrays the soul's original. The soul is not a child of nature and time. Or, so far as it has become so, it has lost its first estate, it is degraded. Originally it was not so. God breathed it into man, not to be *under*, but to be prince *over*, the outer world. He breathed His own Life into him, that man might subject all things to

himself, and that he might be subject to nothing, save God only. "O my God, I do not comprehend all that I am. The mind is too strait to contain itself. And where should that be, which it containeth not of itself? Is it without it, and not within? how then doth it not comprehend itself? A wonderful admiration surprises me, amazement seizes me. And men go abroad to admire the heights of mountains, the mighty billows of the sea, the broad tides of rivers, the compass of the ocean, the circuits of the stars, and pass themselves by; nor even wonder, that when I speak of all these things, I do not see them with my eyes, and yet I could not speak of them unless I saw mountains, rivers, stars, ocean, inwardly, and that, with the same vast spaces between, as if I saw them outwardly." *

4.—The soul not only sees in herself, what she has once seen without; but sees what outward eyes never saw. Blind Milton sees more than the whole world of mortals with their millions of open eyes. Shut up in his closet, he contemplates more than all travellers, from the beginning of the world until now, ever beheld. The world-light which you see, will never reveal to you anything half so sublime, as the visions, which this man sees within

* Augustine.

his own soul. Bunyan is in gaol, but he will convince the world, that he is living in a far larger place than those who walk at liberty. From his prison, he will help those who are free, to escape the dull limits of their freedom. Their freedom is their captivity: under his captivity, he walks at large. Every generation, to the end of time, will reckon him a greater king, than any one who was king, while he was prisoner. He is gone, but the proof and the monument of his greatness, abide with us, in *the work of his imagination.* He dreamed a dream; and there is more reality in his dream than in the grave transactions of all the governments of Europe. There is deeper truth in his fiction, than in Aristotle's logic and the whole of inductive science put together. No history ever written, contains so much truth. This play of a prisoner's fancy, is more strictly (more strictly, because more intensely) related to the heart of mankind, than London and Paris. There is more of human interest in his pictures, than in the actual court, and drawing room life of all nations. And there is a sense in which it may be said, that, this work of imagination is more philosophical than all philosophy.

5.—Man lives *from* the unseen, and therefore cannot rest in the seen. His reason may not think it,

his depraved heart may not like it, but his instincts know it,—that the visible universe is a spacious dungeon to his immortal spirit. The instincts, I say, know that it is a tomb-universe, and they treat it accordingly. It does, say they, bury the divine soul, but it shall not, and forth they go in quest of something greater, better and more congenial than the visible. Your imagination may not follow Christ, and pierce the veil, which hides the ever true and the ever beautiful; but your soul, every day, roams behind the veil of actual things.

III.—The imagination is *a high faculty, either for use, or abuse.* Every man walketh and worketh "in the dark, in the chambers of his imagery." The interiors of his own spirit, are the chambers; and those things which are constantly springing out of the ground of his own life, are the imagery of them.

1.—No delusion can possibly be greater, than that persons are neither the better, nor the worse, for their imaginations. If the invisible man is the true man, and in eternity, is to be the visible man, then the imaginations which he alloweth, must be of quite as much consequence to him, as his conduct. Indeed the imaginations of a

man are as much *his conduct*, as his most outward actions. His imaginations are his inward conduct. Outward actions are the conduct of the mortal man; but the imaginations are the conduct of eternal man. The one is his conduct in the world: the other is his conduct in eternity. The one is open to the view of his fellow-creatures: the other, to the view of God and of angels and devils. According to the imaginations which a man allows, such is he. God beholds one soul freely revelling in imaginations, at which another shudders. Now to all *appearance*, these two men may be equally good; but God sees the widest possible difference between them. One man is careful to cleanse himself from all filthiness of the flesh. Another is careful to cleanse himself "from all filthiness of the flesh, *and spirit*." The former desires the reputation of holiness: the latter is concerned *to be holy*. Will the strictest outward life recommend a filthy spirit to God? Will not every one find on entering into eternity, that the whole life of his imaginations has gone before him, and either shut up his way to hell, and opened his way to heaven, or shut up his way to heaven, and opened it to hell?

2.—In this way, a man either "lays up treasure in heaven," or he "treasures up wrath against

the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Why is the "wrath," which becomes the portion of the impenitent soul in eternity, called, "the revelation of *the righteous judgment* of God?" Because it consists of the issues of his life, those impure streams, which all his days, were going forth from his heart, and accumulating before God, in the eternal world. Every one's unchastened imaginations go into eternity, and amass there, as clouds of wrath, ready to overwhelm him, as soon as he comes thither. And is it not "*righteous* judgment," that the dark clouds of unholy imaginings and of filthy, fermenting affections, should be the portion of the souls who conceived them, cherished them, and who repented not of them? Upon which aggregations of uncleanness, "the breath of the Lord," is said to act, "like a stream of brimstone," on "fire and wood." "Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." The unalterable law of truth and justice, (which is the same thing, as the Spirit or breath of God,) operating through Jesus Christ, upon penitent souls, purifies and saves; but, operating, upon impenitent souls, through their filled-up measure of depravity, results in an

awful storm of fiery wrath. If the action of God, through a congenial medium, is unutterably blessed; through a hostile medium, it cannot be a *little* dreadful. "I will judge you every one after his ways," saith the Lord. "Yet you say The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now; Is not My way equal? are not your ways unequal?" Every one shall reap in eternity, according to *what his spirit wrought in eternity*, while he was yet in the body. The Lord earnestly counsels us not only to seek treasure in heaven, but to *lay it up there.* "Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven;" and after death, you shall possess it. But how could we "lay up treasure in heaven," if our thoughts and affections, our imaginations and the spirit of our actions, did not go thither before us? And does not that awful proverb, "A man shall be holden by the cords of his sin," teach us, that the transgressor is now forging his own eternal "chains of darkness," in the fire of his own life? "The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands." A man's ungodly imaginations effect a real connection between him and all ungodly creatures and powers in eternity; or, his holy imaginations form a connection with the holy world. These living cords of his life, which go out from his soul and enter into heaven,

or hell, bind him to heaven, or hell. The imagination is the very soul going forth, and contracting bonds and relations between herself and that sphere, which corresponds with her imaginings. According to the character of that secret life to which the soul yields herself, while in the body, she becomes an organized member of heavenly, or infernal society.

3.—We cannot wonder that the awakened soul, under the impulse of inspiration, seeing and knowing that eternal consequences must follow the soul's own free actings, should exclaim: "*I hate vain thoughts.*" With intense earnestness such an one prays: "Cleanse Thou *the thoughts* of my heart, by the inspiration of Thy Spirit." "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know *my thoughts:* and see if there be any wicked way *in me,* and lead me in the way everlasting."

4.—In the unrenewed soul, births innumerable, of vain thoughts, and unhallowed imaginations, take place in a single day. "O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness, *that thou mayest be* saved: how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" If they are not expelled, the soul cannot be cleansed, if the soul be not cleansed, it cannot be saved. What part hath a defiled soul in the Kingdom of God? The vain, unholy thoughts, which proceed from the soul herself,

are the things which defile the soul. What advantageth it a man, that he is scrupulous about his outward life, if he does not vanquish the progeny of the serpent, in his own soul. Is he not like a man, whose hands are clean, but who is dying from internal putridity? Or, like one who is exceedingly particular about the outside of his house, but who puts no check upon the accumulation of uncleanness within? Before men, he walks in goodly attire, but before God, he wallows in the mire. "Man looketh on the outward *appearance*, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

5.—It is easy to imagine, as indeed the Lord declares, that "many" will be utterly surprised to find themselves in eternity, what they really are. It is an agonizing thought that "many should come to *Him*," assured of their acceptance, who will learn from His mouth that their souls are wholly foreign to Him, and therefore, unsuitable for heaven. As the master of the house shuts his door upon unwelcome intruders, so must the soul rebuke and chase away all idle and polluting imaginations. There can be no acceptable offering unto God, in that soul, wherein vain thoughts are suffered to lodge. The birds of prey no sooner alighted on Abram's sacrifice, than "he drove them away." If "the

blood of Christ" be in the soul, it will cleanse the soul. If it be not *in* the soul, it cannot cleanse it. And the Divine Blood has efficacy to save the soul, in no other way than by *cleansing it from all sin.*

IV.—Search and see, to what class of spiritual influences your soul is subject. Ascertain the leaning of your heart, and into what affections your will enters. Your will is your very personality. With what invisible powers is your will becoming confederate? If your will receives not its impulse from God, it cannot work in God, nor towards God. If your imagination is not brought into captivity to Christ, subtle spirits will use it to detain you in their sphere, and to cut you off from heaven. If the scope and play of your imagination be not in and under your Redeemer, they must be in and under the wicked one. Remember, the spirits who carry on the work of hell in human souls, are the most subtle of all spirits. They will suffer you to have a seeming connection with Christ, and a nominal faith in His blood;—they will suffer any thing, if only you do not derive *His Life. That,* if possible, they will prevent. The great art of the devil, is to hide from the soul its growing alliance, with his kingdom.

True repentance rouses Hell, to contrive new

stratagems by which to regain the soul. For repentance is the soul going out in great bitterness and self-loathing from all unholy affections and thoughts: while Faith is the same soul entering, with great desire and lively imaginings, into the Heart of Jesus, that it may bathe in His Holy Mercy, and be clean.

AIDS TO THOUGHT.

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God chargeth Himself with the burden of His whole creation. He bears all, He provides for all, He does with all, as seemeth good in His sight. No creature can anticipate his own being: he must first have being. He forms every babe that comes into the world, but the babe that He is forming, knows not what it is to be. He forms the soul for His own eternal Presence, but it does not appear to any one of His heirs, what he is to be. We are *blind;* but God is leading us. We are *His* blind. He will take care of us. We must *trust,* and not be afraid. If we have eyes, we must trust Him, rather than our eyes. Our eyes may deceive us, but God abideth faithful. He will lead us, not according to our seeing, but according to His own Fatherly purpose. We shall open our eyes in His Heaven some day, and be constrained to acknowledge, that though He led us by a way that we knew not, He brought us to the haven of our desire. And beholding our

own glorified form, how exceedingly we shall rejoice that He wrought in us, not according to the poverty of our thought, but according to the riches of His own Glory.

ST. JEROME says:—"It is as impossible for God to bestow Himself under the limitations of time, as it is for a stone to possess the wisdom of an angel."

"I am meek and lowly in Heart." In proportion as any Church obtains numbers, wealth, power, and dignity, she becomes arrogant and imperious. It would seem that as soon as the "grain of mustard seed" becomes a mighty world-tree, the prince of the power of the air and his legion "come and lodge in the branches thereof." It is the established policy of the devil to patronize any and every form of Christianity, as soon as it becomes popular.

The history of Romanism is not a history of meekness and lowliness; but of haughtiness and tyranny. The same charge may be brought against Protestantism, *so far as it is a worldly, political organization.* We ought not to speak

of the Romish *Church,* nor of the Protestant *Church;* but of the Church of the Lord Jesus under both these world-forms. For the genuine disciples of the Cross of Jesus, in both these organizations, are one, and filled with "One Spirit." Romanism has been an iron cage to her meekest and purest children. She permits none of her children to wear simply the yoke of Jesus Christ.

The Inquisition and the Bastile, with all their horrors, are signs for ever of the Heart of Romanism.

O all ye servants of a most subtle system, which you and the devil together have called by the Name of Christ and His Church; if you can hear one who loves you in the bowels of Jesus Christ, I beseech you to sit at the Master's feet and learn of *Him,* rather than at the feet of that mighty spiritual and physical organism, which, although calling itself Mother in God, has given fearful evidence that it is a haughty, heartless harlot, in the spirit and power of "the god of this world." Beware of a Religion, which, in proportion as it inflates the heart with the arrogance and cruelty of self-love, renders the same eternal heart incapable of the Meekness and Tenderness of Love, as it is in Jesus. Your persistence that you are His only Church, is one of the most striking proofs that you have ceased to be *His,* and have

become your own Church. When you are concerned to bring souls to their own Saviour, rather than under your authority, it shall be a sign to yourselves and to all men, that you are not spiritual tyrants, but servants of Christ.

THERE are atmospheres in which a candle will give very little light. There are also atmospheres which will extinguish any candle. The atmosphere about many souls quenches the Light of God.

But though certain atmospheres may quench the light of a candle, it is a *candle* for all that, and *capable of being lighted* again.

Man, thy spirit is God's candle, and the day is surely coming when the God-light will break out of darkness in thee, and shine through and through thee. Otherwise thou art no *man*. For "the spirit of *man* is the candle of Jehovah."

Only let thy outer senses cease to occupy thee, and let the pleasing tumult of nature's affections subside, then, suddenly, not by thy will, but independent of thy will, the appalling Light will startle thee, and hold thee subject to its searching power.

Thou mayest be very far from wishing to be

related to God, but *thou art related.* God hath His own way into thee, and can in the twinkling of an eye, surprise and flood thy soul with His Presence.

The Light of God, when once kindled, searches *as* nothing else can search, and *where* nothing else can search.

To escape eternal pain, we must welcome pain. We must welcome the pain which it will cost us to see ourselves now, *in the Light of God.* It is blessed pain, for the pain which God's Light gives us, is God's own method of quickening the soul to seek His cleansing, healing grace. And oh, how keenly the sin-pained soul absorbs the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Mercy of God, the Divine, effective Pity, flowing to us, (not cheaply, oh no, not cheaply,) through the wounds of Jesus,—"wounded for our transgressions,"—that is the only Balm which can ease the soul, when once afflicted with the bitter sense of sin. To such a soul, *cheap ease* would be no ease. The awakened soul feels that there is an unspeakable congruity, between *the awful cost* of mercy, through the mangled, agonizing, crucified Son of God, and its own *awful sense of sin.*

If the Son of God could not have the privilege of being our Saviour, apart from the inevitable, and inevitably severe, service of treading the wine-

press alone, "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God;" let no one presume to hope for the privilege of salvation, apart from subjection to the discipline of Divine Truth.

ALAS, my poor soul, what a sport thou art of dreams! When thy five senses are asleep, then thou dreamest; and when they are awake, thy dreams are even heavier and more captivating, and thy true senses farther from waking. Thou art all but buried, under the dense, living cloud of thy flesh, and that again is encompassed with the gross elements of nature, and their ever-changing phantasmagoria, cloud upon cloud, appearance plus appearance. Thou art submerged under a sea of dreams:—were I to say, Thou art *lost* therein, I have Divine authority for it. Art thou not exceeding glad, that thy Heavenly Father has set His heart upon redeeming thee? Otherwise thou couldst never see the Kingdom of Truth. Can nature transcend herself? When wouldst thou, *if left to thyself*, find, or finding, be able to pass through, the strait gate, which separates between the house of nature, and the house of God? But thy Risen Lord and Saviour transcends nature; and *He is thine*. Lo,

in the very straitness of the gate, He presses to meet thee, that thou mayest press through in His Spirit. "Many shall seek to enter in," (in their own strength,) "and shall not be able."

He who makes too great haste to be free spoils his freedom. If you are too eager and impatient for pleasure, you will spoil your pleasure. Many are injured by getting spiritual freedom and joy *too soon*;—that is, before the new Heart is created, which is capable of Divine freedom and joy. We have no right to freedom, until our nature and the Divine Nature are in perfect sympathy. If the natural affections are not duly mortified, they will abuse the soul's liberty and joy, to the prejudice of the soul. We must *apprentice* ourselves to God while we are in this house of flesh. We must be *faithful* now; we shall be *free* hereafter. The *strictest service*, is the surest path to our eternal freedom. The Joy of Eternity will grow better under godly fear, and the sobriety of a restrained spirit, than under the elation of present spiritual Joy.

THE *road* to a place is not the place: the road to pleasure is not pleasure. Self-pleasing is the sure way to self-displeasing. The devil pleased himself, and by so doing originated evil, misery, death, and hell. Adam and Eve pleased themselves, and thereby shut the gate of Heaven against themselves and their whole race. By self-pleasing they sold themselves *from* God and joy, into hard servitude, without joy, and without hope. Christ, Who, in our nature, "pleased not Himself," but in all things pleased God, conquered all evil and recovered Heaven.

Beware of the too tempting road, which, from the beginning, has been the road "to Destruction." The road, 'Duty' is the road to eternal pleasure. Directly that you quit the road, 'Duty,' for some self-pleasing course, you are in the way to your own disgrace and sorrow. If you mind your pleasure, in seed time, rather than your duty, how can your field give you pleasure in harvest-time? That person's field will give him the most pleasure, who most carefully does his duty to it. Be faithful to God; and your self-interest will never need a thought. *God will see to that.*

How often the Lord spoke to His disciples about His sufferings and death! But not being able to receive these things into their affections, they had no hold upon their minds. They let them slip. They could not understand them. They could talk of His wonderful works; they could dispute which of them should be the greatest; they could forbid those who were not wholly with them, to do good in *their* Master's Name; they could, with all heart, propose to call fire from heaven to consume those who would not receive Him; but that He should suffer from the hands of men, they could not entertain. What slaves we are of our carnal affections! We think, under them, we explain God's word, under them, we hope, under them. We turn any way, and dwell on any thing, rather than upon the necessity of being humbled, mortified, and in the dearest life of our own will, slain. To be of importance, to be happy in the world and in the flesh:—these are the things that are in our hearts.

THE HUNGER OF GOD.

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BEHOLD, the Creator and Giver of all meats is hungry in His own world! And the God and Father of all Love is a Stranger to human hearts. Wherein is He hungry, and a Stranger, do you say? This is His hunger, that He longeth so greatly after His creatures, affections. And herein is He a Stranger, that His creatures exclude Him from their company and their delights. Imagine a father, whose children should turn their backs upon him, go their own ways, and settle down in their alienation of heart, until they should neither know him, nor care for him. What would be that father's grief? *According to his love,* would be his grief. "Have we not all One Father?" But no creature in earth, or heaven, can have any idea of what the love of that One Father is. What correspondence can any thought of man or angel have with *infinite* Love?

"Our Father Which art in heaven," I can scarcely refrain from tears, when I think of the

treatment, which Thou, daily, receivest from the creatures whom Thou hast nourished and brought up. Thy complaints, long-written, still abide against those who owe Thee most: "If I am a Father, where is My honor?" "Oh that My people had hearkened unto Me!" "O that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me!" "O that they were wise!" "But My people would not hearken to My voice; and Israel would none of Me." The Holy Spirit amongst men is well said to be "like a Dove;" for I can surely hear in these words the moaning and bewailing of the Eternal Love-Spirit. And most affecting are these words of our Lord: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee."—Thy youngest, and in a certain sense, Thy dearest children,—Thy mankind,—have lost all knowledge of their Heavenly Father. When He beheld the city, whose children He could not win to Himself, "*He wept over it.*"

II.—What then must be the joy of God, over those precious souls, who are sighing after Him, and seeking Him with a tenderness of affection, which they can in no wise express? Was not this the condition of that dear, humble maiden, of Nazareth? whereas others were restless, through

worldly covetousness, or heated with fleshly desire, was she not walking in the cool shade of holy retirement, all becalmed, as one who hath found rest in the stillness of Divine Love? Therefore was she filled, beyond any thing that she could ask, or think. As she said: "He hath filled the hungry with good things." I was poor in spirit. My heart was not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither did I exercise myself in great, or wonderful matters. I sought but to love God, and to be loved of Him. And "He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden." "He that is Mighty hath done to me great things." Eternity only will reveal how many of such unworldly souls there have been in the world. Every age has a little flock of them. They are God's flock. I wonder not, that He calls them by every tender name; for all the titles of love and endearment in the world, cannot express His love to them.

III.—The Lord's great desire is towards man. His delights are with him. It is His meat and drink to serve him. He is as one weary of His journey in this dry world, till He finds a soul that has need of Him. Then He finds Heart-rest, and "meat to eat," of which even His disciples are ignorant. Again, the fig-tree to which He cometh, desiring

to find fruit, is man. The soul in which He finds nothing related to His desire, presently withers away. On the other hand, if while sitting at His feet, you find the appeasement of every deep desire in your nature, then, with you, He is no more a weary traveller, but at home. Love longs to be desired. The great heart-ache of love, is, not to be desired. To be desired is Love's heaven. With what satisfaction must *infinite* Love regard desire in the creature! You cannot conceive that satisfaction, but you can *muse* thereupon. Perhaps as you muse, the holy fire may kindle in you. The desires of all creatures towards Him are but His desire after them, moving in their hearts. "'Tis His Spirit's rising beam." Unless His Love be the life of it, our religion is a stranger to Him, and He is a Stranger to our religion. This is that precious oil without which, in spite of our knowledge and our prayers, our faith and our zeal, we shall be classed among the foolish virgins.

IV.—"Let there be meat in My house," saith the Lord. The outward services of the Church may be carefully observed, and yet under these very services, God may be complaining that He is robbed, that no meat is brought into His House. "Bring an offering;"—not your bodies, not your

consciences, not your words only;—bring *your hearts.* Bring them disengaged: if you bring them pledged to the world, and absorbed in the cares and pleasures of this life, it is the same as if you brought them not. Until you give *yourselves* to Him, God will never have His end, nor will you ever have salvation. Nothing can be done for you, till the desire of your heart centres in God your Saviour. The one demand of His Love, is, "Give Me thy heart." If you give Him all that you possess, and withhold your heart, He will persist: "You have robbed Me." If your affections are held back from God, your flourishing worldliness is a curse to you,—your very soul is a curse to you. For your sakes, as the very beginning of His eternal blessing,—God asks your love. "Let there be meat in My House."

V.—O beautiful mystery, that creatures should yield meat unto God; and that this should be *His method of giving them meat.* God returns our love, laden with a hundred-fold increase. The windows of heaven are opened, and its blessing poured upon us, in proportion as our hearts are directed thitherward.

See, how the clouds, which water the earth, draw their supplies from the earth. The dull

vapour ascends, the sun, moon, and stars impregnate it, and it returns back again as fertilizing rain.

The planets are dependent on the sun, for light and heat. By solar influence, they live and flourish. But do they not also feed the sun? Are they not constantly generating atmospheres, which he, as constantly, draws up to himself? Are not the planetary evaporations as fuel to his fire? And are they not returned with a wondrous increase of vital energy?

Are not these things parables? It is most essential that the sun baptize the planets in his beams. It is needful also that the sun be baptized in their atmospheres. Remember you nothing like this, as signifying the relation between the Lord and His creatures? "Then cometh Jesus unto John, *to be baptized of him.* John forbad Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee." The latter is truly essential, but the former also is not to be dispensed with. What are the prayers and praises of God's creatures, but the breath of their inmost being ascending to Him? Is not Jesus still in the act of coming to His disciples, to be bathed in their inmost affections? In all senses, natural and spiritual, the law holds good, that: "Unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again." "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth

Me." And God glorifieth them who glorify Him. No one will surely say, that "the sacrifice of praise" is not a *real* offering. It is just because they are *most real*, that "spiritual sacrifices" are "acceptable to God." After His own Nature, nothing is so real as the affections of His creatures who love Him. Their love is the banquet of His Love, and His Love is the banquet of their love.

VI.—Eating and drinking enlist, and refresh our freest affections. We are never more genial than at a meal, or a temperate feast. The soul comes fully into the body, the body becomes soul, the soul becomes body. Both soul and body dilate, and are in their most generous mood at a feast: the constantly opened mouth is a sign of the condition of the whole nature. God, therefore, invites us to join Him at a feast. For He desires to give Himself to us when our entire being is most open, most cheerful, most natural. "Eat, O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved." "Jesus saith unto them, *Come and dine.*" Let us neither deny it, nor disguise it, that God desires to eat with us. Jesus neither did any thing, nor said any thing, while tabernacling with men in the flesh, which does not represent the affections and relations of God to us. "With desire, I have desired

to eat with you." Luke xxii. 15. So calmly certain is He, that joy is greater than sorrow, and that it will outlive every form of suffering, that He will have a feast on the very eve of His crucifixion. Sorrow is a thing that comes between two feasts, the feast of nature and the feast of eternity. Between the feast on earth and the endless feast in heaven, "you shall weep and lament." The sorrow does but purge and quicken the joy-root of the soul. "I have desired to eat with you before I suffer." To part by feasting together, is like telling the guests: 'Our relation is not at an end, there is a delightful bond between us,—that bond will remain, and we shall meet again. You cannot go with Me now, but you shall come to Me, afterwards. We have eaten and drunk together on the earth: it shall be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.'

VII.—Again, "Have ye here any meat?" said Jesus to His disciples, after His resurrection. "And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and did eat before them." You will not call any passage of the everlasting gospel, mere history, will you, and deny to it a universal sense? If you do, though you may be perfectly instructed in *the letter* of Scriptures, I must maintain that you know not

the Scriptures. Believe me, the Lord is saying to His disciples now, as much as ever: "Have ye here any meat?"

VIII.—Fellowship with God, through His Son Jesus Christ, must begin while we are in the body. We must feast with Him before we suffer, that we may feast with Him for ever, when all sufferings are over. In union and communion with God, we learn to leave the world before we leave it; we drink of the rivers of His pleasure, before we go up to be for ever with the Lord.

O my mother, my sister, my brother, know you not, that the Lord is indeed hungry, in your soul and in mine? And it should become a solemn question with us, for it is a solemn question, whether our Lord and our God can find His meat in the house of our soul, or not. If the Lord finds no meat in us, then also we shall be unable to give meat to the least of all the brethren, in whom He dwelleth. Affecting charge! Is it written against us? "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat."

THE HONOR THAT IS NOT.

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MAN that is in the honor, which Divine Wisdom commends to him, is like the angels, whose glory lives and rejoices for ever. "*Man that is in honor, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.*"

I.—We need not use the term beast contemptuously. The beast is a creature of God. It has pleased God to give man a beast-nature and a divine nature. Man fills up the gulf, that would otherwise be, between angel and brute-life. That which fills up a chasm must touch on both sides. In man, beast and angel are joined. The strange compound is not impracticable. "All things are possible with God." Mankind are cherubic creatures, touching earth and heaven. They are the most marvellous manifestation of His own manifoldness, which God has given. "God dwelleth between the cherubim."

II.—Peculiar glory and peculiar peril go together. Human nature is an unspeakable entrustment; but for that very reason, it is exposed to awful abuse. Man may sacrifice his princely heirship to his lowest craving. The simple beast having no organ for the life of the Divine Understanding, is quite innocent in its perfect abandonment to animal life. It is no reproach to the horse and the mule to live exclusively the horse, and the mule-life. But the wondrous creature, man, whose animal nature is the tabernacle of his celestial nature, cannot give *himself* over to intensify and aggrandize the life of his senses, and be innocent.

As might be expected, some men sink the brute in the angel: others, the angel in the brute. The former direct their ambition towards true honor and glory; the latter towards the sensual honor and glory of the present world. The men who shew a decided preference for the angel-side of their nature, and whose aim it is to perfect it, find a cross in the opposite side of their nature. On the other hand, the men who have as decided a preference for their external nature, and its interests, degrade, and in the end, ruin their angelic partner. God calls man to a very transcendent life; but a very degenerate life is also open to him.

If he yields his spirit to the Divine attractions, he becomes God's mirror, reflecting the Divine Image, on the very confines of the creation. But as hell more than touches the confines, he may be prevailed upon to merge his higher nature in his lower, and thus stand there a mirror of the infernal mind. Instead of responding to the motions of the Holy Spirit, by which his spiritual corruption would be thrown off, and his soul purged; by constantly taking up the corruption of the flesh into his already sensual spirit, his degeneracy is becoming more and more aggravated and confirmed. There is celestial, and there is infernal, gravitation; but he is rapidly losing all relation with the former and falling a prey to the latter. He *knows* better than to sacrifice the Divine possibility of his being, in favor of the brute honors and pleasures of the worldly life; therefore, if knowing the better he commits himself to the worse, he afflicts his eternal being with the curse of *sin*. Sin is the curse of curses; it is the hell of hell.

III.—There are "honors" so called, which are the devil's man-traps. "The kingdoms of the world and the glory of them" are a bait not easily resisted. But honors which are bounded by the

grave are no great credit to an heir of eternity. Can that glory which has no relation to his immortal nature be worthy of him? The mortal man flourishing for a few days in his laurel-leaf honors, and the inner man, going into eternity, without a crown, and in dishonor, are not an enviable condition. O Belshazzar, thy Babylon is a fool's dream: *thou* art weighed in the balances and found wanting. Thy glory is extinct; a very ignominious future is before thee. O man, thou art of more value than many such worlds as this. God has designed for thee a very great inheritance. If thou art so fallen that thou canst not discern the greatness and worth of thy nature; at least, *that Redemption* which God has wrought for thee, might help thy conjectures. Has not God become flesh for thee? Believe it, thy stake is infinite. The right hand road and the left are before thee; the devil persists, and proves to thee by myriads of attractions, that the left hand road is not left, but right. O that the light and courage of God may be in thee to tell the Tempter, that it may be *his* right hand road, but that it is *thy left.* Or, pause, fall down on thy knees, cry mightily for help on the Divine Man, Christ Jesus, that *He* would shew thee thy right way; and rise and pursue *that way,* though it should seem to thine own senses to be

the left hand road of loss, loneliness, and suffering.

It is better to contradict the whole of nature, together with our own fleshly affections and convictions, than be untrue to our deeper divine nature. "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." The whole visible appearance of mankind from the beginning unto the present generation is but as the passing flash of a meteor, compared with the value of a single eternal, invisible man. What a solemn mockery are the honors of the mortal man, if the eternal man is condemned before God! What is the man profited who has had the honor that is but for a moment, if he is to inherit shame and sorrow for ever? Or, the man who has run through his short career in the honors and pleasures of time, and who finds that his soul, which might have been redeemed, is finally ruined;—what shall this man give to get his soul brought back again to the days of probation? *No answer!* "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" *No answer!*

IV.—The course of God for man, is always from lower things to higher, from life to life, inferior to superior. The course of nature is birth and death, but the Divine order for human life is

birth, and birth, and birth. First, man comes a sensuous creature into a sensuous world, an illusion to an illusion. Secondly, by believing the testimony of God, and submitting himself unto God, this twofold illusion is greatly corrected by an interior spiritual birth. The latent powers of his soul are quickened into activity, and he walks by faith in a world which transcends every appearance, that can be presented to his senses. His soul being quickened out of heaven, his affections are raised into heaven. He dwells on *that objective world*, which corresponds with his new subjective condition, and rejoices in the prospect of seeing it face to face. His faith is the evidence of things not seen, by which also he overcometh the world that is seen. In due time the new interior life of his spirit altogether outgrows the capacities and sympathies of his first nature. Therefore, in the beautiful order of God, there comes a third birth, the grand release, his translation from the unreal to the real; and he finds himself in a world every way congenial to his new nature, adequate to the far reach of his thoughts, and in perfect sympathy with his chastened, hallowed affections. He sees before his eyes, the glory and joy of that life, which is established within him. His outward circumstanes

and his inward condition are in harmony. He is full of joy. Such an intensity of the affections, together with the clearness and expanse of his understanding were not possible in the body. The house of flesh is peculiarly appropriate for the initiation of a fallen spirit into the eternal life; but it is utterly incompatible with the enlarged growth and perfection of that life. By his first birth, man and nature are kindred, but by regeneration and Divine culture, he exceeds nature's limits and possibilities. Nature abides the same, but man becomes ennobled, and transcends her appreciation. But heaven appreciates him, and he appreciates heaven. He will awake from deep sleep some day, and find himself living in that kindred sphere; and be susceptible of its helpful, blessed inspirations. Heaven is man grown, and opened, *according to God.*

V.—If any thing could give man rest and self-approval in the merely wordly life, secularism, as it is pleased to call itself, would. There is no superior light in secularism to plague the soul. Yet the soul is plagued. You may easily find utter secularism in speech, or in print; but no man's soul is an utter secularist for all that. Certain strange scintillations occasionally rise in

the darkest soul. It is also a sore vexation to the secularist, that other persons believe. He would be more reconciled to his dry morsel of mortality, if other persons had not the ease and dignity of wealth,—*the wealth of faith.* He wants more authority for his secularism. He wants the authority of every creature's consent. And there are times when even that would not be enough for him. It is very easy for the flippant tongue to deny all grandeur to human life, by cutting man off from God and immortal existence; but it is not very easy for the solitary man to silence the immortal nature in himself. Now and then it will sigh and complain, regret the past and stand in awe of the future. If the secularist would be faithful, he would acknowledge that secularism does not wholly solve the problem of his nature. You can inflict no severer penalty on the unbeliever, than to leave him alone in the quiet possession of his unbelief. He labors to persuade himself that he is "like the beasts *that perish.*" But if no one disturbs him in his fool's inheritance, he will disturb himself. He may laugh at the faith of others, but his own *blank* makes no laughter for himself, *when alone with himself.*

THE DEEP THAT LIETH UNDER.

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WHEN, in submission to the will and motion of the world-Former, the central rocks of ancient chaos disposed themselves into dreadful caves, and, in rudest fashion overarched the same, as though they were still playing their old game of monstrous anarchy; when the fire-ocean was restrained within its caverns; when the hills arose, and arose above the great deep;—how madly would the disturbed waters rush hither and thither, round the mountains, forward and backward, and, in boiling, roaring, foaming commotion, even dash and rush over their tops, until they permanently settled in their huge beds. But what a picture of peace, when, as by Divine enchantment, the meek, green, beautiful sward overspread the hills, slopes, and plains of the dry land!

II.—Thus did the new world display its

platform for the races of creatures, which were shortly to appear. But the new world was but *the old world subjugated, brought into order, and under law.* The wild elements were restrained under nature's new and beautiful face; but they were all there. And they *are* all here still. The great deep is here, every drop of it. It is calm sometimes; but it has not forgotten how to rage and war. The ancient darkness is here,—it is all here. On certain starless nights, it is just as visible to us, as the light, by day. The awful fire, the boiling, sulphurous lava-ocean is still here. The quiet earth on which we walk is an arch turned over wild and dreadful elements. Underneath our feet they toil and heave, they mutter, they smoke, and rest not, night, nor day.

The green-sward is very peaceful, very lovely, but far down beneath the said sward, abide the old furies, brewing their vengeance; and, when permitted to play forth their dread power, they convulse the sea and make the earth tremble. Were it not, that here and there, safety-valves are provided, and vent is given, they would soon, by their terrific throes, shatter the world to pieces, and bring overwhelming chaos back again.

"As for the earth, out of it cometh bread; but under it windeth the region of fire." Job xxviii. 5.

III.—Now one work of God is like another. All His works reflect and illustrate each other. One element is the mirror of all elements. The elements, as they are at present related and combined, in *their* world-order and form, are a mirror of man, in *his* present world-order and form.

In peaceful times, men are like the green-sward, but deep and central, the infernal fires sleep in them, ready at any moment to awake.

1.—The trade and commerce of the nation; its domestic hearths; its reverend temples; its gracious treatment of foreigners; its pity for the miserable: what are these but the meek and beautiful face of the nation, the green-sward over all! but under all, Hell lurks, the angry passions of the old rebel-gods hide themselves. The very men who are so meek and loving by their own firesides, so genial and courteous over their social tables, so humble and devout in their churches, and who, under certain circumstances, would endanger their own lives to save even a stranger;—these very same men, under different circumstances, show the spirit and fury of very hell-dogs. With a tread that makes the earth ring, and with fiery vengeance flashing from their eyes and pressing every nerve into service, they go forth on their mission of destruction.

2.—As is the nation, such is the individual. The same type holds good, therefore, of the writer and the reader. Over our ordinary life there appears the meek and harmless sward; but how much provocation can we stand, without shewing that we hold in reserve, lying under all our gentleness and neighbourliness, very considerable powers of wrath. If a man be strong enough always to restrain the fiery forces of his nature, they are not therefore extinct. The lion may be muzzled, but he is a lion for all that.

3.—The new convert is often deceived by his conversion. His old nature has suddenly fallen into such a lull, under his new life and joy, that he fancies his old nature is no more. He is mistaken. The elements of the tempest are still present in the fairest sky. He feels that he is a new creature, he is charmed with the change; he is become just and lovely in character, and sweet in his temper: there springs up within him a heavenly peace, which he never knew before. He thinks his evil nature and his hasty, ugly temper will never trouble him again. He is mistaken. Surely he will never fall from the heaven of his new nature, and become a prey again to the restless passions of the old man. Yes, he will. The change in his character is like the meek and beautiful

green-sward which covers very wild fires. His new spirit and character cover the common nature of men, in which the evil fires of fallen spirits conceal themselves, waiting and watching for their opportunity of outbreak.

4.—As for the earth, out of it cometh bread, but within it are labyrinths of restless fire. With striking emphasis, these words apply to the spiritual earth, *the Church*, which, from generation to generation is the depository of "the Bread of Life" for the world. Yes, it is undeniably true, that the Church of Jesus Christ carries in her bosom all the worst passions and sins of fallen nature. For bitterness, the dissensions of the world are not to be compared with the dissensions of the Church. The differences of barbarous tribes are far sooner healed than those of the Church. Under the arrogated authority of God and of Christ, little, stubborn, fiery souls have fought equally without scruple and without mercy, for their own conceptions. Contending pagans are able presently to resign their wrath, and to sit down and eat together in the spirit of mutual forgiveness. Not so the Church. Unto her has been committed the meekness and patience of Christ, the good-will and tenderness of Christ; but with these, for a cloke, oh what venom, what fierceness, what heart-

less powers of persecution have lived, and from time to time asserted themselves with dreadful effect. No one who knows any thing of Church-history can wonder at the Master's words, that many of "the children of the kingdom" will be finally "cast out" into that wrathful, fiery element in which they indulged so eagerly.

"*His servants ye are to whom ye obey.*" If you act under the love, mercy and gentleness of Christ, then you are *His*. If you act under the self-will, anger and hardness of the devil, then you are *his*. Every soul becomes joined to that source whence he derives his spirit.

IV.—What are we to understand by the strange law, that the meek and beautiful should hide the terrible? Is it absolutely and necessarily an evil? By no means. In improper hands edge-tools may do much harm; but their design and end are for good. The terrific element of fire is not in itself evil. Where there is fire there is danger; but without fire there is no possibility of good. Life is a fire, love is fire, joy is fire, all glory in heaven and all beauty on earth are from fire. Fire is universal, and of universal service. But whatever serves unto highest ends, if uncontrolled, or used amiss, becomes fearful for

mischief and destruction. If there were not heat in the earth, as well as in the sun, it would bring forth neither flowers, nor bread. If there were no passions in human nature, mankind would neither have graces nor virtues. There must be latent fire, to receive fire. There must be love, to receive love. The love of God becomes productive through the love of man. Growth is the result of a meeting between solar fire and the latent fire of the earth. Spiritual life is the quickening of a spiritual fire. Hell is a spiritual fire, under the devil: Heaven is a spiritual fire, under God. Let inclination and self-will use your passions, and they will work your confusion and ruin; give them to God, and they become your glory. Men with little fire in their nature, may be useful; glorious, or even charming, they can never be. Men with strong fiery forces in their nature, which, under meek control, serve to brighten their faces, to give largeness of heart to their measures, warmth to their words, and energy to their works, are much more than useful. There is a charm as well as a use, in sunshine. So these men are more than valued; they are *admired.* Men, women, and children acknowledge their attraction. They are God's *glorious* servants. When such men minister God's Truth, they turn many to

righteousness. Not in this dull world only, but in Heaven itself, where all is glory, they shine as suns. Wherefore the Church is not to be reproved for her fiery ardor; too much of which she never had, she cannot have. Christ utters no complaint that His ministers are "a flaming fire." But He charges them to take heed as to the spirit which commands their zeal. For many exercise authority and power in the Name of Christ, and yet "know not what spirit they are of."

Many.—"In Thy Name we have done many wonderful works."

Christ.—"I know you not, depart from Me." "His servants ye are to whom ye obey."

The devil has no greater delight than to make the Name of the Lord Jesus a cloke and an apology for his own hellish spirit.

The meekness, sweetness, and beauty of Christ, are the more admirable, because they cover awful energies. To suppose that in Hell, there are fiery forces exceeding those which Christ carries in His Bosom, is a great mistake. As there is more fire burning in the world, to good account, every day, than in all the destructive fires of the world in a whole year; so there is far more fire in the glory and joy of heaven, than in the torment and destruction of Hell. But, under the innocence of

Christ, there are mightier and more terrible energies than heaven can conceive, or hell could endure.

With the utmost adoration, and godly fear, I record the substance of Job's words as supremely applicable to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Out of Him comes Bread, the Universal Bread of Life; but within Him is the Source of all fire.

Let *Him* redeem us from sin and the devil,—let Him subject our passions to *Himself*,—and our humility and meekness will become the hiding-places of an energy which the powers of hell can neither dispute, nor resist.

"And there was war in Heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels." The latter prevailed *not;* but the former prevailed; for in them was the Life of the Lamb.

He is "KING of kings and LORD of lords."

AIDS TO THOUGHT.

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"In the declining age of a state," said Lord Bacon, "mechanical arts and merchandise do flourish." What! the nation waning, when mechanical arts and merchandise are flourishing? Nine men out of ten would say the very opposite. But unquestionably my Lord Bacon is right. In a truly great age, the souls of men are absorbed with great principles, they are stirred up to attack ancient wrongs and revered abuses, they are intent to sow the earth with truth and righteousness. *Great faith* makes great men;—men who can in no wise sell themselves into world-slavery. Their souls are not at liberty for mechanical inventions, nor are they sordid enough to be ambitious for the profits of commerce. They are inspired with a divine idea of human life. In a truly heroic age, men have too much to do with God and Truth, to become distinguished *worldlings*. How can mechanics and merchandise be carried to their utmost pitch of perfection, unless men devote their whole souls

hereunto? But the representative men of a truly great age apprehend too clearly the vanity of the world and of mortal life, and the grandeur of the soul and its eternal destiny, to abandon themselves to the elements of the world.

But when the age declines, when there are few divine souls left, when a carefully worded theology takes the place of *faith* in the earth, when men forget that their souls have descended from God, and are returning to God, when men withdraw from the influences of eternity, to live under the influences of time; then are they able to give their whole souls, as well as their bodies, to the service of the present world; and then, ("Ichabod!") the glory of *God* and of *men* departs, and the glory of the *world* is in the ascendant. The *world* becomes rich, luxurious, wonderful; and *men*, under the notion of being earth-kings, become poor, inglorious earth-worms. Their mastery of the world is the world's mastery of them.

I am not acquainted with the history of drinking healths; but I have no doubt that it originated *in faith*, as well as in good-will.—A party of friends meeting together knew that when

their affections were exhilarated by intercourse and a generous beverage, they had the power of affecting and magnetizing their friends at a distance, with their cheerful, lively spirits. They believed, that the fulness of their health, and the overflow of their joy, under the direction of their will, would reach the absent, flowing in upon them, like a genial tide of health and comfort. Subtler and more active than lightning are the human spirits. The overflow of spirits must flow somewhither. Love commands them to flow to the beloved. And surely none are more likely than they to be open to the influx.

In an age of *no faith* the custom becomes a mere ceremony. But rely upon it, in the beginning, it was no ceremony.

If a thousand Red Seas threaten to drown us, we must "go forward." Our "Goshen" *was* delightful, but we must not go back to it. We must nobly resign our Egyptian paradise, and go through seas and deserts, believing that *the land of God* is before us. "Go forward."

THE Beautiful Distress. As I have felt a tear-drop from a cloudless sky, and wondered whence it could come: so have I seen a fair countenance, full of openness, serenity and majesty, and the large, still tear standing in the eye. Yet no single muscle was distorted: it seemed to me like the stillness of intense emotion, like the sorrow of goodness, like a broken heart at peace with its own woe: as though one, whose hopes of earthly bliss had all vanished, were comforted from within, by the presence and assurance of Holy Love, saying: "It is well: Peace be unto thee."

We are overcome by the tyrant sin; but our Captain was not. "He was made sin for us," and overcame sin. We are under the curse, and cannot help ourselves against it: "He was made a curse," and turned the curse into a blessing. We must ask Him to conduct His process unto victory, in us. We must invite Him as a Refiner, to sit, and stir His Holy fires within the very vortex of our chaos, that He may transmute it into eternal gold. The process is terrible; but the end, thrice blessed.

Lord Chesterfield says: "If you would make a man pleased with you, the best way is to make him first pleased with himself." What wonder that, "the Faithful and True Witness" should in every age be "despised and rejected of men?" When any one is pleased with the Truth, and welcomes it, although it makes him displeased with himself;—in that person the grace of God is triumphant over nature.

If self accusations sow any seed, there is many a dear brother whose soul will be a Harvest-field by and by. But here, and now, he is in a great strait. How, by suffering *God's order* to be fulfilled in him, he can earn this world's bread, is often a considerable perplexity. Yet if one *could* esteem the reproach of Christ to be more profitable than all the treasures of the world, and would steadfastly accept any thing, with Christ, and nothing without Him, an incalculable recompence of reward would be sure to that soul. Accept your Cross, whatever it is, for in the very heart of it, there lies a precious yield of holy peace. Your fortune is growing in God's hand: wait His time.

Says the world's bible: "A bird in the hand

is worth two in the bush;" and that is the bible that most of us go by. The devil submits to us some shining apple *to-day;* while God promises to make us meet for a gainful, endless to-morrow. Fools that we are, we generally shake hands with the devil, and strike the bargain.

O Lord, if Thou wilt grow Thy meek lilies, on the graves of our former selves, no self-reflection, nor fond conceit shall spoil their fragrance. All the kind eyes, kind words and kind affections directed to us, shall instantly pass to Thee. For the spirit of *our* life having gone out of us, *Thou* shalt wholly possess us. Thus, Thou shalt be the richer for our nothingness; and we, in our very nothingness, shall be more open to Thy sweet fulness.

THE ESSENTIALS TOWARDS THE END, ARE NOT THE END.

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EVERY thing has its beginnings, or first principles: Heaven itself had. Heaven has been younger and weaker than it is now. It is still not perfect before God. His purpose and plan concerning it, are not yet carried out. The angels are learners still, and will be for ages to come. God is perfecting Heaven, and innumerable angels and spirits of just men are co-operating with Him, to bring *His* Perfectness more and more fully into it. The first angels will have to wait for the last of the redeemed; and for the grace, wisdom and strength which they will bring. The first, we are told, cannot be perfect without the last. Heb. xi. 40.

II.—No one becomes a beginner in any thing for the sake of being a beginner, but for the sake of being a master, or proficient. The beginner, therefore, in due time, leaves the first principles of his profession, or trade, and goes on to the higher

branches, and to the highest, namely, to all the secrets and mysteries of his calling.

III.—In Religion, the highest and noblest of all callings,—in Religion, the all-comprehending Art of the whole Divine Life,—nothing is commoner than for beginners to be never any thing but beginners. They ought certainly to be perfect in the beginning, for they are always beginning. They begin very properly with the a, b, c, of Christianity; but strange to say, nine-tenths of them stick there, and never get out of the alphabet-class. So confidently, and self-justifyingly, they ask: 'Are not the essentials of all knowledge contained in the alphabet? It was in the alphabet-class that we first entered the school, and Church of God. Fundamentals are fundamentals: God forbid that we should ever leave them. In the alphabet-class we mean to live and die.' They say what they mean, and they do what they say. They do live and die there. And moreover, they are so comfortably sure, that they are the only wise men, that, without the least scruple they charge those who do not end their days in said alphabet-class, with leaving the grand essentials. According to their conviction, whoever leaves them, to go on, goes wrong. *They* never *go on*, and they

know that *they* are right. Where they began, they remain, and there they mean to remain. When the Master calls for His talent, they will take it out of their careful napkin, and delivering it to Him, say, 'Lo, there Thou hast that is Thine," exactly as we received it.

There are many things which, to them, were "hard to be uttered," when they were young converts, seeing that they were dull of hearing; and lo, after thirty, forty, or even fifty years, they are harder to be uttered, to them, than ever, for they have added to their dulness of hearing, great *stubbornness*. Teach them their a, b, c, and they will be very patient with you. Stick to their alphabet, and they will stick to you. But if you bring out "things new" to them as well as their own old things, they will leave you, charging you with leaving their gospel. As though persons who should accompany you *unto* a house, charged you with leaving the house, when you left them, to go *into* it.

They ought to be teachers by this time, but they are not: they are not even learners, they are beginners, always beginning. They do not go to church to be *instructed*, but to hear whether the minister abides in their class, and faithful to his a, b, c, or not. If he does, then he is sound: if

not, then he is unsound and dangerous. Let him stand still, and they will "stand by him;" but if he goes on towards perfection, he must go alone, for they will not follow. Or, to take St. Paul's figure, they had need of *milk* when they began, for they were babes; and they have need of milk now, and not of strong meat, for they are babes still. They are defined by the Apostle as being "unskilful" (inexpert, unversed) "in the word of righteousness." "Strong meat," in which their elementary milk is compacted, and lost in a higher, fuller substance, they cannot take. Of the fulness, depth, and harmony of "the word of righteousness," they have no comprehension. They know it in its most rudimentary and superficial character, and nothing more. Like persons who have only a phenomenal knowledge of nature and no actual knowledge; so their knowledge of the Word is surface-knowledge, and not the knowledge of its inner contents. They have some acquaintance with "the letter" of Scripture; but about "the treasure *hid* in that field," they do not trouble themselves. And they take care to disown those who do.

The thing to be regretted about these babes, is, that they are babes in nothing but knowledge. The meekness, simplicity and innocence of babes,

they have long since lost. In understanding they are childish, but in loquacity and self-will they are old men. They have stood still at the beginning so long, that, if they are still to be called "babes in Christ," they are very dry, tough, uninteresting babes, and must be carefully distinguished from the genuine "new-born babes" of the Church.

It is very unhappy both for themselves, and the interests of the Church, that these crude beginners, these thick-skinned babes, who cannot, will not, be taught, set themselves up for judges. They jealously guard and defend the pulpit, carefully reserving it for a sound a, b, c teacher. Babes in the pews and babes in the pulpit, have made a baby-Christendom. Thanks be to God, the exceptions are many, and rapidly on the increase.

IV.—As to what are the rudiments of Christian doctrine,—the initatory principles of the doctrine of Christ,—it is well for us that the Apostle has not left it an open question. But before we enter upon his catalogue of these rudiments, let the reader be admonished against drawing a false inference. Let us take heed that we err not, by lightly estimating the principles which we are called upon to leave. Their importance cannot be over-estimated. They are essential to a right

beginning, and therefore, they are essential to the right end. They are the *ground-work* of all future progress. And the ground-work not only comes first in time, but continues to be of first importance. First principles are not to be left in the sense of being given up, or renounced; but left as a foundation is left, from which the edifice is upbuilt. This is indeed precisely St. Paul's definition of what he means by "leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ,"—namely, "*not laying again* the foundation."

He presents to us Elementary Christianity under six heads; linking them together, two and two: namely, repentance and faith; baptism and laying on of hands; resurrection and judgment.

1.—"*Repentance from dead works, and Faith towards God.*" By nature every man is an apostate spirit, not subject to the law of God, but subject to the law and motions of the false god, "the prince of the power of the air:"—as the first essential therefore, to his salvation, he is commanded to repent, that is, to change his mind, and his whole spiritual state and relations.

Under the conviction of his ruined estate, he tears himself away from his standing, as it is by nature, in order that he may re-adjust his relation with God. He perceives that there is nothing in

himself, nor in the course of nature, which can heal his disordered spirit. He repents. He turns both from nature, and from himself. Neither his judgment, nor affections, will consent to be a mere child of nature any longer. He must come out of his natural condition. It is Egypt, it is Sodom, it is a curse, and not a blessing to him. He repudiates, therefore, his first nature, in the hope that God will help him to a wholly new nature. He wishes to be transferred from nature, into the kingdom of God's Dear Son. This is repentance. It is the soul passing out of the state of reprobation into that of election.

It is called "repentance *from dead works;*" because, while he continues in his natural condition, whatever be his works, whether works of virtue, or works of vice, they are works of death, and they will end in death. Outwardly religious acts are as certainly dead works, as sinful acts, if the affections of the soul are not freely turned towards God. The genuine penitent loathes and abhors his fair-seeming round of "dead works." In a word, he repents of all dead works by disowning himself. Not only his works are sin, but *he* is sin, dead in sin: how then can he bring forth living fruit, until he is made alive?

"*Faith towards God.*"—Repentance breaks

up the soul's relation with the false god; *Faith* is the soul's relation with the Living and True God. Repentance is man turning from death; by Faith he turns to the Source of Life. The only life which he has hitherto known, he knows now to be *death*,—the great tempting death. The flow of his life has been towards whatever is visible: now it flows "*towards God*," the Invisible. In the purpose and affections of his spirit, he adheres to Christ, that he may find God, and that the Spirit of God may reach him. His penitent desires make a tender appeal to the pity of God; and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, sets him free from the law of sin and death, which is in his own nature. The life of his deadly injustice is thus supplanted by his life of faith, which is equally the life of justice and grace. What can be more unjust than to live without God? "Faith towards God" is the fallen creature's first act of justice. "The *just* live by faith."

2.—"*The doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands*," are the second twain in elementary Christianity. Faith introduces the soul to a divine bath, in order to its regeneration. But why are "baptisms" spoken of? Is there not a baptism into repentance, *and* a baptism into faith?—baptism into death and baptism into life? Not

once, but always, and always, John's baptism precedes that of the Lord. The soul must die, in order to be made alive. Our "one baptism" represents every spiritual baptism which the soul undergoes. Repentance is a spiritual death, but it is "*unto life.*" The soul puts off one life, and puts on another;—called putting off "the old man," and putting on "the new man." Outward righteousness, resulting from "the washing of water *by the word.*" is essential; but much more is inward righteousness, or the "renewing of the Holy Ghost," essential. There is a twofoldness then in baptism, representative of death unto sin, and the new birth unto righteousness. Baptism is both negative and positive. Penitent believers are "*buried* with Christ in baptism, wherein *also* they are *risen* with Him, through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead." "In that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin; but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." As many as are "baptized into Jesus Christ" are baptized both into His death, and into His Life. By the one, they are separated from Hell, and by the other, qualified for Heaven. They are dead with Christ: they are risen, and alive with Him for evermore.

"*The laying on of hands.*" Baptism is *initiation* into the great doctrines of repentance and faith: laying on of hands is *confirmation* in the same. And it is surely important that we should not only *enter* into the kingdom of heaven, but that we should be *established* therein. St. Paul, therefore, adds to baptism, "the laying on of hands," as included in "the principles of the doctrine of Christ." Indeed, who can doubt, from the practice of the Apostles, and their Epistles, that they received the one, as much as the other, from the Lord Jesus? Why, in certain communions, the one should be retained, and the other dropped, I know not. I can more easily understand the disuse of all Sacraments and Church-forms, as for example, by the body of Friends, than the exclusion of certain, unquestionably Apostolic ordinances, from the practice of Christian bodies, who profess in all things to be subject to the teaching and authority of the New Testament. If the patriarch Jacob attached importance to the imposition of his hands on the heads of Manasseh and Ephraim, is it not most humbling, that, "the ministers of the New Testament," should discontinue this form of service on behalf of their young converts? In what does the very distinctive glory of the gospel consist, if not in this, that it is "the ministration

of the Spirit?" According to St. Paul, one thing is clear, that if ministers can only minister the letter, and forms of Christianity, they are not "able ministers of the New Testament." For said the Lord Jesus: the Living Water shall flow through you:—"*this He spake of the Holy Ghost.*" I grant, that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" but I also earnestly maintain, that the Christian Church, *ought to have faith*, in "the laying on of hands," and in the relation of the same to the communication of the Spirit. All outward things in the Church are for the sake of inward things. And all these outward things should be observed in their due course and order, in submission to the Wisdom that appointed them. It is well indeed for us, and for our children, that God worketh amidst all our disorder; but let it not be forgotten that He loves order, and in His own working, observes order.

3.—The third twain, mentioned by the Apostle, as belonging to "the first principles of the oracles of God," are "*the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.*" Apostacy from God is death. Man loves this death, and calls it life. Not the testimony of prophets, nor the testimony of angels, nor even the testimony of the Lord Jesus, could convince men that their natural life is death. It

requires the work of the Holy Ghost in the heart, to convince man of his death in sin. His life is death demonstrating itself; and in that he loves his state of death, it is a state of sin. When the Holy Spirit has wrought in us a *conviction* corresponding with our actual state, we sorrow with a godly sorrow; and we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that we may be made alive. We believe no longer in the world's mode of life, which is death, but rather in our Lord's mode of Life, which is Life indeed. Not to believe in which is truly to be "dead in sin." Whatever we inmostly believe, that we inmostly *are*. Whoso inmostly believeth in Christ, *hath* eternal life; for Christ is Eternal Life. To receive Him into our souls is to receive "the Resurrection and the Life." This is our first resurrection from the dead. We were dead; we "walked according to the course of this world," which is a course of death, being "according to the prince of the power of the air;" but now that we believe in Him, Who lives and reigns in the Power of the Endless Life, we are made alive together with Him, and raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus. We have passed from death unto life. Our souls which were the graves, are become the temples, of true life. This resurrection which has taken

place in our inmost being, is to be fulfilled in our whole nature. Rom. viii. 11. We shall be made outmostly what we are inmostly. God clothes every principle and affection with its own appropriate body.

If nature were delivered from its vanity and corruption, and brought into affinity with the spiritual condition of "the dead in Christ," would it not inevitably follow, from the law of their inmost being, (which is no other than the Divine Law operative in them,) that they would instantly appropriate to themselves bodies from the renovated elements?* Rather, will not the sons of God present the first manifestation of glorified nature? Rom. viii. 19-23.

"*Eternal judgment.*"—If "God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts," the principles of Truth are already in us; for Christ is the whole circle of Truth. Now where Truth is, there is judgment; and the judgment that is according to Truth, must be "*eternal judgment,*" for Truth is eternal. Christ in us, is the Eternal Truth of God revealed in us, which is the same thing as the eternal judgment, revealed in us. Every one in

* If the elements are not in the soil corresponding with the inmost principles and essences of the seed sown in it, the seed cannot clothe itself with "its own body," but must wait until the elements necessary for its manifestation are provided.

whom dwelleth the Spirit of Christ, successively repudiates and puts off every thing that is contrary to the Divine Nature. Thus is the judgment of God executed and carried out in every soul who truly believes in Jesus. The boldness, the perfect rest, the love without fear, of the children of God, in Eternity, is the result of their having undergone eternal judgment. There remains nothing in them to be judged, nothing contrary to God. They *were* obnoxious to His judgment: now, they stand approved. For they are the workmanship of God, "created in Christ Jesus,"—created, therefore, according to Eternal Truth."

V.—Such are the first principles, or groundwork of our religion. They constitute "the beginning of Christ" with man. To know them is to experience them, and those who experience them are regenerate persons, and members of the Body of Christ. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye must be born again." But the new birth is not the end: it is but the beginning. It is the essential beginning, in order to God's glorious end. Every one knows that birth is not maturity. Only by a long and patient process of Divine culture does the babe, come unto a perfect man, in Christ Jesus. The babe is not born to abide a babe; but to grow

up unto "the stature of the fulness of Christ."

"Therefore," says the Apostle, "leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, *let us go on unto perfection;* not laying again the foundation of repentance, &c., &c., &c. In all the future stages of your progress, the first principles will be included; but the first principles should not include and conclude your whole life in Christ. "Grow up into Him." If you loiter about the base, how will your mansion get built? Remember, a divine base is not a divine mansion. You must leave the first story of your eternal house, to build up the second, you must leave the second, to build up the third.

You say, 'The Holy Spirit witnesseth with our spirit that we are children of God:—what can we want more?' God is truly the Author of His own beginning, and He is therefore with you from the very beginning; but how much more will He be with you, as your eternal house rises and advances in all its goodly proportions.

VI.—"*Let us go on unto perfection.*" It is much easier to speak of that which is in part, than of that which is perfect. That which is in part can be spoken of in detail; but that which is perfect is both too full and too simple for detail. It is full,

for all things are in it: it is simple, for all things are in it in unity. All heavenly and divine affections and powers are present in the perfect state; and yet they are not present as many things, but as an ineffable simplicity. Definition supposes imperfection, for perfection is beyond definition. Indeed a state of perfection cannot be apprehended by the understanding. It is completeness of *being*. It is perfectly related to God, and God to it. And how can that which is utterly one with God be shut up within boundaries and descriptions. In God, and through God, its capacities and activities are innumerable, and past finding out.

The Apostle, therefore, tells us what he means by first principles; but not what he means by perfection. One thing he does: he asserts, to the last, his own remoteness from it. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after," &c., &c. Phil. iii. 12, 13. But is it not remarkable that, immediately after asserting his imperfection, he should class himself among the perfect? "Let us therefore, as many as be *perfect*, be thus minded:"—minded of the vanity of our own righteousness, and of the necessity of following after the Righteousness of Christ. The perfect condition of a fallen creature is to apprehend Christ and His Perfection; but the full develop-

ment of that Perfection in the creature is another thing. St. Paul knew that he was among the perfect, for He was "*in Christ*;" but he knew also that he was not personally perfect*ed*. "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before," said Paul, the aged, "*I press* towards the prize." "If any one be otherwise minded," and thinks in his heart that he is personally perfect, "God shall reveal this" fond conceit to him some day,—perhaps by allowing him to fall a prey to the weakness and corruption of his own heart.

VII.—The progress of a soul from the beginnings of piety, on and on, to that which is perfect, is like the progress of creation, from darkness and chaos, unto its end, (not the Adamic and paradisiacal end, but "*the end*,") when God shall be "All in all." The progress itself from beginning to end is too much for thought; but distinct moments and stages of it are comprehensible. It is as though God would make that which, as a whole, is incomprehensible, comprehensible part by part. In the end, that which is in part shall be done away, and that which is perfect shall come. The parts will be lost in the whole: yet not lost, but present in their fulness and order, in their unity and rest.

VIII.—Perhaps one reason why St. Paul's writings are more studied and spoken of, than St. John's, is, that St. Paul runs into detail, argument and illustration; while St. John speaks rather of that which is perfect, one, and simple. In St. Paul we have "the word of knowledge:" in St. John, "the Word of Life!" Knowledge consists of parts, of things opened, explained and understood: Life consists not in parts, and can neither be explained nor understood, but is one, whole, indivisible and perfect.

IX.—In this perfect, or whole thing, there is indeed perfect knowledge; but it comes from within, as a condition of perfect being. Beginners receive their knowledge from without; but the perfect are God-anointed, and in His Light see light. "The anointing teacheth you all things,"—yea, it discerneth "the deep things of God." For this anointing is nothing less than the Life, THE WORD, in them. "In Him is Life, and *the Life is the light of men.*" God teacheth the perfect immediately from His own Life in them, and they have no farther need of creature-teaching. In the Eternal Life which dwelleth in them, is the eternal eye, which seeth into the hidden things of God and eternity.

Every attribute of "the Life" is one with every other, and transcends the understanding. In it is Love, but it "passeth knowledge;" and Peace, but it "passeth understanding;" and Joy, but it is "unspeakable and full of glory." "The Life" is also supremely useful; but its usefulness can neither be estimated by sense, nor by thought. For "The Life" operates silently and invisibly, by its own currents, flowing from soul to soul.

X.—Doctrines about salvation are not "the Life." "The Life" is the Lord; and doctrines about the Lord are not the Lord. Blessed are they who are following on to know *The Lord.* But in spiritual things, quite as much as in carnal things, we are "careful and troubled about many things." Many doctrines, many views of doctrine, many churches, and many modes and forms of worship and service, from time to time, agitate and distract us. Doctrines, like the stars, are many; but the Lord is One. It is late before we learn, that, especially, in the spiritual life, "One thing is needful." Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, if we have chosen this good part. We shall be no more tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. Have we not more than all doctrines, and more than all

Church-forms, in that One Object, Which we have set before us? Day by day, are we not passing out of nature's light, which is darkness, into the Lord's own Light? "His going forth is prepared as the morning." Are we not struggling through the painful division and conflict of nature's affections, towards that divine singleness of heart, which is both perfect love and perfect rest?

XI.—Before we can realize God's permanent indwelling, our souls must be greatly purified from their natural qualities. If our life towards God be *real*, it will grow, and acquire the dominion over our whole nature. As it becomes more and more inward, it will be more and more influential over all that is without. When the Lord Jesus entered into "the holiest of all," how much greater and wider, even in the world, His influence became. So is it with every disciple: the more inward the life, the more potent it becomes also. The rind of fruit, the shells of nuts, and the husk of grain, are not only outer, but their virtues are not to be compared with their inner substance. By its life in the Lord, the soul draws more and more of His Spirit into itself, until it becomes a divine, love-magnet. In which condition, it is capable not only of helping like-minded souls, but of even reaching and affect-

ing, in a very remarkable manner, the most thoughtless and ungodly of men. If you have knowledge, you can give knowledge, if you have doctrine, you can give doctrine; but the wondrous, far-reaching sympathies and virtues of Jesus Christ, cannot go forth from you, if you are not interiorly "made partakers of Christ." The Spirit of Love, will not uniformly triumph over a judging spirit, in you, unless the Spirit of Love be far stronger in you, than the judging spirit.

Love is not only the highest thing to give, but it gives itself more freely than any other quality can do. Heat can go where light cannot go. Love can go where truth cannot go. If Truth prepares the way for Love; much more Love, for Truth.

XII.—And is it not a righteous and a beautiful law, that whatever imparts itself most freely, also receives most freely. Love receives from God, and from men, the very thing which it gives to God and men. Love will complete its circle, and return with increase into the bosom whence it went out. Without labor, love-natured souls are constantly overflowing; for, like fountains, they are constantly fed by their own overflow.

XIII.—If we are organs of our own life, that

is, of our own measure of truth and love, our experience will be subject to the limits and qualities of our own life. If we become the organs of God's life, we shall be greatly emancipated from ourselves. "I am crucified;" says one, "nevertheless I live; yet *not I, but Christ* liveth in me." O glorious deliverance, not to be shut up within the conceptions of our own minds, nor within the affections of our own hearts! O noble, blessed enlargement, to inherit freedom from one's own mind, in God's Truth, and freedom from one's own heart, in God's Love! If we are under ourselves, we shall only love kindred souls, or those who are of our party. If we become organs of God's Love, we shall breathe forth God's love to all men. God's Spirit is not only greater and broader than any one class of His children, but greater and broader than all His children in heaven and earth put together.

XIV.—Our want of enlargement then, is a want of God's Spirit. There is too much of ourselves in us, too little of God. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." "The Lord brought me forth into *a large place.*" Our divisions, are constantly warring against "the unity of the Spirit." The perfection of the individual life, as well as the

perfection of the whole Church, involves the surrender of all our divisions. "The Spirit of unity" includes in itself all our divisions, without division. In that which is perfect all things must be present, and present, not in strife, but in perfect peace.

We are not called to make this unity. We cannot make it. It exists, and it only can exist, in the "One Spirit." It is more or less in creatures, but in itself it can neither be more, nor less. "The unity of the Spirit" waits to be received, both by individuals, and by the whole family of God in heaven and earth.

XV.—We are a long way yet from unity; and therefore from "that which is perfect." We shall not soon come to it. It is too divine a thing to be speedily fulfilled in the creature. Indeed, when we do come to it, we shall only know how great and blessed it is, by reviewing the ages upon ages of division and strife, through which we struggled on to God's great end. We *shall* come to God's end. God and His creatures together are coming to their great joy. The best wine will come in at the end. God's end is unity's endless festival. We are coming to it. The labors of God, the labors of the angels, the labors of the Church, the groans of all creatures, and contentions of all elements, will go on, and never,

never cease, "till we all come unto the Unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Perhaps the Church will yet have to look, less to antiquity, and more to the great end of God,—the unity of all His creatures, in the love and knowledge of Him, Who is Himself the Beginning and the End of all the ways of God.

XVI.—It is impossible to arrive at the *absolute* unity of the Faith, sooner than the whole Church is complete,—or, in other words,—sooner than God's idea in the universe is fulfilled. When the outbirth of the fulness of Christ comes before God in His redeemed mankind, then, and not till then, will each individual be perfect. For as the whole cannot be perfect, without all the parts, neither can any part be perfect, except it be in the whole, and the whole in it. All the members are essential to the perfect man, and the perfect man is essential to the perfection of the members. "*None* of us will come" to the great unity, "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," "till we *all* come." God waits for "the perfect man;" heaven waits for "the perfect man;" "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain," waiting for "the perfect man." "And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits

of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for" "the perfect man." The whole universe travaileth with Christ to bring that about, which shall surely be done, namely, that God and His creatures become one:—"One Spirit" in "one Body." "As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be ONE IN Us."

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